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Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-96-110 *6 June 1996*

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Inter-Arab Affairs

Inter-Arab: Husayn, Mubarak, 'Arafat Hold News Conference

JN0506134396 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1027 GMT 5 Jun 96

[News conference by King Husayn of Jordan, Egyptian President Husni Mubarak, and Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat with foreign and domestic correspondents at the royal palace in al-'Aqabah on 5 June—live; italicized passages in English]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Husayn] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. On behalf of all Jordanians, I am glad to welcome the two dear brothers; Brother President Muhammad Husni Mubarak, leader of the march of bigger sister Egypt, in Jordan in his second homeland and in this part of Jordan where we met several times in the past. I also welcome my Brother Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat in his second homeland and among his kinsfolk and brothers.

This meeting is a continuation of the constructive meetings that began in beloved and dear Egypt. These meetings will continue, God willing, in order to discuss all issues, to coordinate, and to cooperate in all that is beneficial to our Arab peoples in the greater Arab homeland.

With luck, this may be the nucleus or the beginning of meetings that will include, God willing, the brothers in our greater homeland in the future. This is an honor and duty for all of us in view of all the fraternal bonds among us. It is a duty toward this nation and this march amid these circumstances, and toward the future generations.

I welcome my Brother President Mubarak and my Brother President 'Arafat, and we hope to meet again shortly. We notice this huge number of journalists and media men. We hope to have the chance to answer your questions. Thank you.

[Mubarak] First of all, I thank his majesty the king for this meeting here in al-'Aqabah. For a long time it has been our custom to meet and coordinate on all issues that concern the two countries and the Arab nation as well.

We met today, and we discussed several issues and the current situation. We discussed the peace process and the problems facing it. We discussed how to unify Arab ranks and how to restore Arab solidarity because this is an important issue and we are doing our best in this field.

Thank you, your majesty. I do not differ on any word you mentioned. Thank you to all brothers.

['Arafat] I deeply thank his majesty the king for providing us with this opportunity to hold this important meeting amid these circumstances through which our Arab nation is passing and in face of the challenges confronting us. Our first meeting was in Cairo. Your majesty generously invited us to the second meeting. I am happy to participate with your majesty and with brother President Husni Mubarak in Jordan, this twin country. God willing, we will hold another meeting in holy Jerusalem, the first of the two qiblas [direction to which Muslims turn when praying] and the third holiest place; the place to which Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, made his nocturnal journey; and the cradle of Christ, peace be upon Him.

We greatly hope that in these two meetings in Cairo and al-'Aqabah, in Jordan, we are laying the solid foundation for the unity of the Arab nation, and for more Arab strength and integration. God bless you, your majesty the king, for this blessed effort, and God bless you President Mubarak for this blessed effort.

[Faraj] I am Caroline Faraj from the Jordanian newspaper AL-RA'Y. Your Excellency the Egyptian President, my first question is: You have just spoken about the means of unifying Arab ranks. At the same time, after 72 hours, another tripartite summit will be held, in which Egypt will take part. The objective is the same, that is, Arab coordination and the peace process. Do you not see any conflict in this role?

[Mubarak] What role?

[Faraj] The role in terms of Arab coordination and integration through attending two tripartite summits for the same objective within 72 hours. The second question is for President 'Arafat: Can we say that Netanyahu's assumption of power may ease tension between Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and the National Authority? Thank you.

[Mubarak] Regarding the first part which concerns me, there is no conflict between the two meetings. Egypt has relations with all Arab countries. Egypt always seeks to establish peace in cooperation with its Arab brothers. Today's meeting in al-'Aqabah with my Brother His Majesty King Husayn and Brother Yasir 'Arafat basically deals with the question of peace, because they are two major elements in the peace process. The other meeting that will be held in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, God willing, on Friday evening will also deal with the peace process. However, in that meeting we will talk with the brothers who will attend about the need to unify Arab ranks and move in this direction. Without this principle, I do not think that we can meet as Arabs at one time. There are various conditions and many problems and differences. We have

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been working on this issue for a long time. I hope that I will succeed, God willing, by the end of this week in reaching a solution or taking a step or steps that will help the process of Arab reconciliation and rapprochement, despite the differences among countries.

['Arafat] If you are waiting for an answer from me, I would like just to remind you of the statement that was issued by the Palestinian leadership — the PLO Executive Committee and the Palestinian National Authority's Council of Ministers — which asserted the unity of the Palestinian position in facing up to all developments and changes.

[Husayn] If I may speak briefly about some brothers, I think I am speaking on behalf of the great and dear brothers here. I say that we have a total conviction that peace and the road to peace are irreversible. Peace means implementing all that was agreed upon and continuing until a comprehensive peace is established in the region as soon as possible. God willing, this will be realized in the future, thanks to the efforts and conviction that this is the sole road that will serve the future generations in the entire region.

[Unidentified correspondent] My question is to the three leaders. Where does the peace process stand now in light of the latest developments in the Israeli arena following the Israeli parliamentary elections. Will the peace process stumble once again pending the American elections?

[Husayn] It is also my belief that our common conviction and position toward the Israeli elections is that this is an internal event that concerns the Israelis. It is an Israeli option. We have absolutely nothing to do with it. There is a process which we believe is serious and purposeful and will continue. We will see in the near future, God willing, that this process will crystallize into a reality. This is an internal Israeli event concerning the Israeli voter's opinion of who should preside over the government and lead the process on the Israeli side. As for the American elections, frankly, I do not believe that they have anything to do with the issue. I think that there is a world consensus on the need to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the region regardless of these natural developments in this world.

[Correspondent] *My question is addressed to three distinguished leaders: His Majesty King Husayn, President Mubarak, President 'Arafat. What are your expectations from the coming government of Israel? Thank you.*

[Mubarak] I will answer the question in Arabic. First of all, as my brother his majesty the king said, the election of an Israeli prime minister is a domestic issue that concerns Israel, and we do not interfere in it, just as we don't allow any country to interfere in our domestic affairs. These are common principles. We do not allow anyone to interfere in our affairs, and we do not allow ourselves to interfere in the affairs of Israel. As for the election of a new Israeli prime minister, I wish him success. I hope the peace process will continue. We should not judge the new government until after it is formed to see what road it will take. If it takes the road of peace, then we are with it. If it takes another road, then we might have a different position.

[Correspondent] *Your Majesty, President Mubarak, President 'Arafat: Since none of you protested when Mr. Peres* [words indistinct] *Prime Minister Netanyahu* [words indistinct] *delay.*

['Arafat] *First of all, we are committed to the peace process. And as his majesty has mentioned, and as President Husni Mubarak has mentioned, that we respect the democratic choice for their representatives and for their leaders. At the same time, we are committed to the process. We are committed to the peace process in implementing what had been agreed upon and what had been signed, including Hebron and Jerusalem, settlements, refugees, the safe passage, terminals, and many other issues.*

[Husayn] *I would like to add here that I feel that all of us feel the same; I mean there is a process, there are agreements that have been reached. We hope that they will be honored, we hope that they will be built on further in the process towards the attainment of a comprehensive peace in this region.*

[Mubarak] *We had some experience with the Israelis concerning our agreements in the past 17 years ago. When the Taba issue was put before the court, then there was a decision that Taba belongs to Egypt, really they showed that they are committed to that and they respect their commitment. I could have the feeling that the new prime minister will fulfill the commitment and will fulfill the agreements that have been signed before. This is my feeling.*

['Arafat] *You have to remember the most important issue; that they had promised us to release all our brothers the prisoners and the detainees, and especially the females. Until now, they have not been released. We hope that the first step for the Government of Israel to fulfill what they had promised.*

[Correspondent] A question to the three leaders. We notice these days that Arab mini-summits are being held to set the Arab house in order and to adopt an Arab position toward any challenge to the peace process. What about the contacts that the parties to the peace process can hold with Western parties that can have an

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effective role in the peace process, such as the United States or the EU, in light of the extremist statements that continue to come out of Tel Aviv and which can turn into a negative Israeli position toward the peace process? Thank you.

[Husayn] Regarding the contacts, they are not confined to the three of us. Naturally, we are all in touch with each other, and with others in this world. I believe that peace is the objective of all good people and the international community, which supports us and assists this process. Incidentally, I personally will be in the United States some time soon. My presence there will give me an opportunity to meet with the President and a number of officials. We are constantly on the move. Brother Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] returned from London this morning. His Excellency President Mubarak is a leading worker for and a believer in communication with this world. This is because without the world we cannot serve our cause and objectives, nor can we win friends and fair supporters for our cause and the right of our people and peoples to attain their objectives and rights

[Mubarak] I may add a word. After the election of the new Israeli government or the new prime minister, I believe that we all have noticed the world's interest in the peace process and the concern of some parties in the world about the suspension of the peace process. Consequently, this gives an indication that continuous contacts are held between us and the entire world and among the world states on the peace process. The peace process is the focus of international contacts, whether with Arab countries, European parties, or the United States. For a month, intensive contacts have been carried out in this direction among the Arab parties, Europe, North America, Latin America, and Asian countries.

[Correspondent] A question to the three leaders: The al-'Aqabah summit has been described as the summit of leaving the stations of fear and waiting, especially since it comes days after the political coup in Israel. Hopes are pinned on the three leaders to lay down a negotiatory Arab strategy to maintain the momentum of the peace process. The other question is: Why has there not been a summit among the Arab cordon states that are directly concerned with the peace process so as to unify their stand on the future of the peace process? Thank you.

[Mubarak, laughing] You have frightened us by your talk about stations of fear, the coup in Israel, and the Arab cordon. First, there are no stations of fear. Nobody fears anybody. We are all looking for peace. A coup in Israel? We cannot call it a coup. This is the people's choice. It is a very natural democratic process. There is no room for stations of fear. Our talks here in al-'Aqabah deal with how we can support the peace process and how we can agree as brothers among the so-called cordon states, for which maybe we should find another name. It is a useless name. There is no problem. Many other names have been used. But we are now looking for a name that is line with the spirit of the age, a refined [preceding word in English] name. However, God willing, we will arrive at peace. There is no fear about.

[Correspondent] A question to His Excellency President Muhammad Husni Mubarak. The Egyptian leadership's efforts and constant endeavor to close Arab ranks and heal wounds of the past are greatly appreciated. However, at the same time, some Arab officials have leveled charges against Jordan and said that Jordan is an entity that was created to protect Israel, and things like that. How do you view this? Do you believe that such statements can serve Egypt's efforts?

[Mubarak] Sir, if we take statements too seriously, we will not talk to each other and will not talk to Israel, our neighbors, or anybody else. We should not take statements too seriously. So many statements are made. Some statements are made for local consumption. We should not give statements undue attention. We want to bypass such frivolous things and ridiculous charges. Let us get to the essence and let us be realistic and practical. Let us look into the peace process to arrive at what may satisfy our people.

[Correspondent] [word indistinct] my question is: Did the Cairo meeting and then the al-'Aqabah meeting lead to bringing views closer in order to support the [?Palestinian] position [words indistinct] with the Israelis?

[Husayn] As far as Jordan is concerned, it is for Palestine and it supports the brothers and kinsfolk in Palestine to achieve their rights on their national soil under their leadership which truly represents them.

We deal only with the PLO and this leadership, whose position was enhanced after the recent [Palestinian] elections. We support it with our utmost capabilities. If we have any credibility in this world, this credibility is employed to fulfill the objective of achieving the Palestinians' rights on their national soil. We will do the impossible for this purpose.

[Correspondent] Your Majesty: [words indistinct] such a summit by President [?al-Asad]?

[Husayn] This will be answered by Brother President Mubarak. [laughter]

[Mubarak] The time must come when we all will meet, and there is no alternative to this. I do not believe

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President al-Asad will be hostile to or stand against this line. He has enough experience and will consider things very well and proceed with the peace process. This is very important, and we are all Arab brothers.

[Husayn] Moreover, on the personal, humanitarian level, the relationship between me and brother President al-Asad has never been affected. Perhaps, we have differences in trends, convictions, and interpretations, but they can be resolved, God willing, if the objective is to serve our cause and [words indistinct].

[Correspondent] Your Majesty King Husayn, Your Excellency President Mubarak: There was a Jordanian welcome and Egyptian trade cooperation with Iraq after Iraq was permitted to partially resume its oil exports. Do you believe that this is the beginning of Iraq's return to the Arab fold? Are there any Egyptian-Jordanian initiatives in this regard or not?

[Husayn] By God, this is a question....

[Mubarak, interrupting] A clear question.

[Husayn, laughing] This question is somewhat confusing....

[Mubarak, interrupting] No. In any case, your question does not need an answer. The answer is clear. To begin with, relations are continuing, despite the fact that they were subdued for some time. These relations are also being enhanced.

[Husayn, interrupting] We care for Iraq and for its unity and territorial sovereignty, and for its people's unity and their rights on their own soil. Let us pray that Iraq will emerge safe from its troubles and suffering. We want Iraq at our side in the Arab homeland, safe and sound.

[Menashe] I am Sha'ul Menashe from Qol Yisra'el. Your Excellency President Mubarak: The political activity on the Arab level....

[Mubarak, interrupting] The activity? Excuse me, I thought you were speaking in French. [laughter]

[Menashe continues] In other words, there are moves and contacts as if the peace process faced a setback, God forbid. The question is: Why is there not a wait-and-see attitude in order to really find out the positions of the other side? Thank you.

[Mubarak] We did not say anything different from this. We say: Let us wait. We should not be hasty in our judgment on developments until the elected prime minister assumes his powers, forms his government, and begins work. Only then will we be able to judge the government. I have said this many times, and I believe that his majesty and Brother Abu-'Ammar agree with me.

[Husayn] Moreover, we are very optimistic, God willing.

[Mustafa] I am Salah-al-Din Mustafa from Egyptian Television. A question to His Excellency President Mubarak: In general, the hardliners in history showed flexibility at historic turning points. Nixon, the enemy of Communism, opened the way to China. De Gaulle led Algeria's independence from France. Begin returned Sinai and agreed to dismantle its settlements.

In light of history's lessons, can Netanyahu's hardline words change? Do we need to increase the Arab political action in order to change Netanyahu's words while waiting?

[Mubarak] Is this question addressed to me or to his majesty the king?

[Mustafa] To your excellency.

[Mubarak] I cannot pass judgment on what you call Netanyahu's words. Exactly as with any electoral campaign in the United States or elsewhere, [Netanyahu's] electoral campaign included many fiery statements. However, when an official assumes power and responsibility, it is a different story. I am waiting until an Israeli government is formed, and until the prime minister-elect assumes power. I hope, and I have a feeling that he will proceed on the path of peace.

[Correspondent] *Your Majesty, President Mubarak, President 'Arafat: How serious a problem do you think it is that Mr. Netanyahu, who has said many times that there can never be a Palestinian state?*

[Husayn] *I think many have said that before, and I tend to agree with my Brother President Mubarak and President 'Arafat and with many in suggesting that responsibility is now going to be in the hands of the prime minister-elect. We believe that the peace process is irrevocable. There is no turning back. There is no other logical course that can be taken except to pursue the course we have adopted to attain a comprehensive peace in this region. And, at the same time, the Palestinian dimension is the most important dimension of all. So, we have every hope and every confidence that the challenge will be met by our counterparts on the Israeli side, and that the interpretation I had was not a question of a peace camp as opposed to those who oppose peace. I believe that the Israeli elections were on the subject of the person of the prime minister. That is their choice, that is a democratic process. We look forward with hope and confidence that the peace process will be resumed, and that it will achieve its objectives and its ends. Look forward. Don't look back.*

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['Arafat] *Sooner or later, to accept or not to accept, we are approaching to declare very soon our independent Palestinian state, and its capital the Quds sharif* [holy Jerusalem]. *I mean it, I mean it, the Quds sharif. And this is the desire of the Palestinian people, and nobody can stop it.*

[Mubarak] *I'll tell you something concerning the same point of an independent Palestinian state. In the charter of the Labor Party, they didn't refuse, and they accepted a Palestinian state. Maybe in the Likud party, they didn't mention it. Or as far as I could know, they didn't agree to that. But anyway, it will lead to a Palestinian state. What these statements or this, what is mentioned in this charter or that charter, the history will prove that the Palestinians are going to establish a state now or then, whether we like or not.*

[Correspondent] *Whether Mr. Netanyahu likes it or not as well?*

[Mubarak] *I don't think. I cannot foretell now about what Mr. Netanyahu means about that. But I think whenever he takes power and take the responsibility and start negotiating with the Palestinians, he will take his decision, the decision which will satisfy the needs of both sides to establish peace in this part of the world.*

[Correspondent] *President 'Arafat: We note with interest what you've just said about a Palestinian state. Mr. Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister-elect said that he would like to meet soon with King Husayn and with President Mubarak. But he has not mentioned with you. Does that worry you?*

['Arafat] *No. No. No.*

[Husayn] *And may I add something while we are at it now in this very friendly atmosphere here. Whenever you mentioned an independent Palestinian state, there are always things that you mean, but you do not mention, and that is a substitute which might be Jordan. Let me make it abundantly clear that if it is impossible to see a Palestinian state come to exist, it is even more impossible to see Jordan involved in this particular issue. The question is the right of the Palestinians on their soil, and we are for whatever they decide on, and we are fully supportive of them. We will never under any condition be a substitute for them. [applause]*

[Mubarak] *I'll tell you a story about that Mr. Netanyahu mentioned that he is going to meet with his majesty and meet with me, and he didn't mention Mr. 'Arafat. If we go in 1986, when the United States were refusing to contact the chairman of the PLO, to speak to 'Arafat as such, I mentioned several times and in the presence of King Husayn in Washington with Ronald Reagan, I told him you have no other way else, either you contact 'Arafat, with the responsible man, who is being accepted by the heads of states in the Arab world, or you're not going to reach any solution to the problem. It ended that the United States started to contact 'Arafat. The same thing with the Labor Party, with Mr. Rabin, with Mr. Peres. But I think Mr. Netanyahu didn't say I am not going to meet 'Arafat. But I think he understands very well that he should, at some time, to meet with 'Arafat to discuss with him the rest of the problem.*

['Arafat] *If you permit to add, you have to remember that we went to Madrid when Shamir was prime minister and Netanyahu was the spokesman of the delegation to Madrid. And in his room, the meeting was going on between the Israeli delegation and the Palestinian delegation.*

[Correspondent] Your Excellency President 'Arafat: You said you were relieved by the U.S. assurances you have received after the election of Netanyahu. What makes you feel so relieved? Were there, for example, any U.S. promises to bring pressure to bear against Israel to redeploy in Hebron, for example, so to arrive at the final settlement? Thank you.

['Arafat] In fact, the contacts that took place recently, the letter I received from President Clinton, and the contacts that took place between us and the U.S. Administration were very important. These contacts stressed the U.S. support for the continuation of the peace process and for the implementation of everything that was agreed upon and signed in Egypt and Washington. I would like to emphasize something else. The contacts were not only with the U.S. sponsor, but also with the Russian sponsor and the EU. Yesterday, while in London, I received a lengthy phone call from President Chirac following the talks I had with British Prime Minister Major. I had contacts with many other European officials. I received letters from Norway, Japan, and the entire international community. The international community unanimously supports the continuation of the peace process and the implementation of what has been agreed upon.

[Correspondent] A question to his Excellency President Husni Mubarak. Some believe that this summit was held to discuss discuss the Palestinian track, and that the summit in Saudi Arabia will be held to discuss the Syrian track. Is this true?

[Mubarak] This belief is unrealistic. When we sit down, we do not discuss one track and forget the other. No track is more important than the others. We discuss the peace process as a whole, including the Palestinian and Syrian tracks and how we can support them. We would not discuss one track and leave the other. Otherwise, all of us would sit together and get finished with all tracks.

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There would be no need to exhaust onself by moving from one place to another.

['Abd-Rabbuh] I am Khalil 'Abd-Rabbuh of the AL-AYYAM newspaper. A question to His Majesty King Husayn. More than once, most recently at the Cairo summit, your majesty said you reject the so-called Jordanian option. However, a few days ago, Ehud Olmert, a Likud leader, said that he prefers a Jordanian role in Jerusalem. Some Likud leaders say that there should be a Jordanian role in the West Bank in the final-status settlement. What is your majesty's view in this regard?

[Husayn] I believe that I answered this question a short while ago. It is certainly inappropriate to raise this subject again. We went as far as telling Brother Abu-'Ammar that we do not even want to raise the confederation issue now. We want to support our brothers to fully attain their rights on their national soil. We will not be a substitute for them. We will not impose ourselves on them. We will not do anything of this sort at all. We will support them to the best of our ability. They are negotiating the Palestinian dimension. The decision is theirs. We fully support them. I do not want to keep reacting to every statement by every one. This is our position, in which I absolutely and unequivocally believe. It is an irreversible position.

[Correspondent] Your Excellency President Mubarak, there have been many suggestions that the al-'Aqabah summit today and the Riyadh summit on Saturday are to pave the way for a comprehensive Arab summit to be attended by all Arab kings and presidents so as to take a unified position on the expected developments. What is your comment?

[Mubarak] We are working for an Arab summit. But I believe it is difficult to have a comprehensive summit because of the existing problems. However, through cooperation with some of our brothers in some states, especially in Saudi Arabia and Syria, we are doing our best to reconcile stands as a first step toward Arab solidarity.

[Husayn] Let us hope for the better.

[Mubarak] Thank you.

[Husayn] Thank you. [applause]

Inter-Arab: 'Text' of al-'Aqabah Summit Participants' Final Statement

JN0506124496 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1122 GMT 5 Jun 96

["Text" of final statement issued at the end of the tripartite summit held by King Husayn of Jordan, Egyptian President Husni Mubarak, and Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat in al-'Aqabah on 5 June—read by announcer]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate.

In continuation of the talks that began at the tripartite Egyptian-Jordanian-Palestinian summit held in Cairo on 12 May, His Majesty King Husayn, His Excellency President Muhammad Husni Mubarak, and His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat met in the city of al-'Aqabah on 5 June 1996. The three leaders stressed efforts to continue the peace process, ensure commitment to all agreements signed within its framework, and affirm the need to help the Palestinian side in particular in the final status negotiations and redouble efforts to resume negotiations on the Lebanese and Syrian tracks. The purpose of this is to achieve real and comprehensive peace, based on respect for mutual rights and duties, the implementation of the land-for-peace principle, and Resolutions 242 and 338, which are stipulated in the Madrid conference and to which all parties committed themselves, to withdraw from all the occupied Arab territories.

The three leaders reviewed ways to support their Palestinian brothers in negotiating the final status so as to enable them to reach an agreement that guarantees their legitimate national rights on their national soil and that asserts legal, historical, and spiritual Palestinian, Arab, Islamic, and Christian rights regarding Arab Jerusalem.

The three leaders objectively evaluated the Israeli elections, calling on the new Israeli Government to continue the peace process on the basis of the Madrid conference, and asserting their conviction that peace is a strategic and irreversible option for all parties in the region.

The three leaders stressed that higher Arab interests dictate continuing their meetings and supporting cooperation and coordination among them to support the peace process and make efforts to expand the circle of Arab meetings to reach real Arab solidarity.

Inter-Arab: Interior Ministers Condemn Iranian Involvement in Bahrain

LD0506233496 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 5 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The general secretariat of the Arab interior ministers' council has expressed its condemnation of the news about Iran's involvement in the acts of violence and destructions which the State of Bahrain has been witnessing over the past few years.

Proceeding from the unity of the internal security of any Arab country, for being a part of Arab collective

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security, it strongly condemned the intervention of any foreign country in the internal affairs of a council member country with the aim of stirring sedition, destabilizing security and stability, and attempting to overthrow the regime by force.

In a statement to the Saudi News Agency [SPA], Dr Ahmad al-Salim, the council's secretary general, expressed his complete solidarity with the government of Bahrain and his absolute support for all the measures it has adopted to repel the terrorist and destructive attempts, to guarantee the imposition of its sovereignty over its territory, and consequently to provide security, safety, and tranquillity for its citizens and sons.

He called on Iran to respect the rights of neighborhood and the religious ties which linked it to neighboring Arab countries.

Islamic Affairs

Political Islam Review: AL-SHA'B 28 May

NC0506093996

[FBIS Report] The following is a comprehensive review of all items in the 28 May edition of the Cairo Arabic language newspaper AL-SHA'B that pertain to political Islamic issues.

CONTENTS:

1. Journalists Stage Sit-In To Protest Press Law.
2. Campaign Against Minister's Son Continues.
3. Al-Qadhdhafi Invites Mubarak, Clinton To Visit Plant.
4. Shukri Backs Libya Against U.S. Threats.
5. Islamic Meeting in Libya Viewed.
6. Mashhur Views Israeli Elections, Arab Affairs.
7. Iran's Revival of Silk Road Viewed
8. Writer Praises Political Freedoms in Israel.

JOURNALISTS STAGE SIT-IN TO PROTEST PRESS LAW

Hundreds of journalists staged a sit-in at the Press Syndicate headquarters on 27 June to protest Press Law 93 on its first anniversary, Khalid Yunus and Dawud Hasan write in an approximately 400-word report on pages 1 and 8. During the 3-hour gathering, journalists called on the government to declare this law null and void and denounced the government's intention to include some articles of the old law in the new draft law being debated at the Consultative Council. The journalists deplored the trial of journalists, including AL-SHA'B Chief Editor Majdi Husayn, under the "suspicious" law and vowed to continue their struggle until the law is revoked.

In a related report on page 2, the Human Rights Legal Aid Center published the name of 99 journalists, including 25 chief editors, who were questioned or put on trial under the provisions of Law 93.

CAMPAIGN AGAINST MINISTER'S SON CONTINUES

In an approximately 2,500-word article on page 2, Chief Editor Majdi Husayn notes that he disagrees with Islamist and non-Islamist intellectuals on their judgment of the Egyptian people's attitude toward their rulers. Husayn points out that while these intellectuals claim that it is the habit of the Egyptian people to be submissive and yield to their rulers, he believes that the Egyptian people's resistance to the rulers is different from other peoples in that Egyptians "absorb the shocks" then "hit" back after much patience and deliberation, for they believe that standing up to power is not an everyday process and that the final attack against an unjust power needs preparation and patience. After citing examples from Egypt's history to back up his argument, Husayn explains that the journalists' campaign against Law 93 epitomizes the Egyptian people's peaceful and civilized resistance. Another example, he adds, is the "spontaneous" input of the Egyptian people to the AL-SHA'B anti-corruption campaign against the son of Interior Minister Hasan al-Alfi, who filed a libel lawsuit against AL-SHA'B Chief Editor Majdi Husayn. Husayn notes that the Egyptian people have set up a "popular committee" to trace the property and assets owned by the al-Alfi family and report their findings to AL-SHA'B newspaper, backed by photos, documents, and other proof. Noting that the newspaper is flooded with responses from the people to the campaign, he adds: "The picture has become quite clear in the mind of the people. The dispute between AL-SHA'B newspaper and the interior minister now symbolizes what is happening throughout the country. The people have opted to take the side of righteousness and protect their interests." Concluding, he notes that when the government fails to do its job in curbing corruption, the people will fight corruption on their own.

On page 1, the paper lists some of the property owned by 'Ala' al-Alfi, son of Interior Minister Hasan al-Alfi, on the Cairo-Bilbays road, including a farm, a marble and granite factory, a villa, and others.

AL-QADHDHAFI INVITES MUBARAK, CLINTON TO VISIT PLANT

Mahmud Bakri writes an approximately 350-word report on pages 1 and 8 in which he points out that during his visit to Cairo Libyan leader Mu'ammmar al-Qadhdhafi invited President Husni Mubarak to visit the

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Libyan plant, which the United States claims to be the site of a factory producing chemical weapons. Bakri adds that "during the talks held in the past days with President Mubarak, al-Qadhdhafi expressed readiness to receive U.S. President Bill Clinton, or any U.S. President elected in the coming U.S. elections, for a visit to these sites to ascertain the falsehood of the U.S. allegations in this regard." The writer adds that Cairo has made specific proposals to resolve the Libyan-U.S. crisis, adding that the details of these proposals will be agreed upon by the Egyptian and Libyan foreign ministries.

SHUKRI BACKS LIBYA AGAINST U.S. THREATS

Labor Party President Ibrahim Shukri, in an approximately 1,500 word article on pages 1 and 8, welcomes Libyan leader al-Qadhdafi's visit to Egypt, which he says comes at an important time as it follows the "U.S. threats to launch a new aggression against Libya for allegedly possessing a chemical plant in the area of Tarhunah." Expressing his party's support for the Libyan people in the face of these threats, Shukri adds that the Labor Party takes these threats seriously in view of the previous U.S. aggression against Libya and its attempt to "kill President al-Qadhdhafi personally in an incident unprecedented in the history of relations between countries." Shukri adds that the U.S. attempt to justify its aggression on Libya by the presence of a factory producing chemical weapons "exposes U.S. policy in the region." Explaining, he points out that the United States is against the elimination of Israeli nuclear and chemical weapons, but at the same time is threatening to strike at Libya and Iran merely for suspecting that they possess nuclear and chemical weapons.

ISLAMIC MEETING IN LIBYA VIEWED

The statement and recommendations issued by the Popular Islamic Leadership's meeting held in Banghazi, Libya, in mid-may is published on page 4. Muhammad Abu-al-Futuh writes an approximately 4,000-word dispatch from Libya on the issue, noting that more than 300 representatives of Islamic organizations from the Arab and Islamic world met to discuss U.S. threats against Libya and how to confront them.

MASHHUR VIEWS ISRAELI ELECTIONS, ARAB AFFAIRS

Muslim Brotherhood General Guide Mustafa Mashhur writes an approximately 2,000-word article on page 5. He points out that elections vary from one country to another, but in general free and honest elections provide a good chance to choose the real representatives of the people. Noting that the Israeli elections are scheduled for 29 May, Mashhur points out that the two main parties contesting these elections are the Labor and Likud, who are "two sides of the same coin," that of rancor and hostility toward the Arabs and Muslims. The two, he adds, share the same goal of setting up a Greater Israel from the Nile to the Euphrates, with its capital in Jerusalem. Mashhur points out that the Israeli Labor Party is trying to win the Arab vote through deception and false slogans, such as support for the Palestinians' right to establish their own state, adding that he is against Arab participation in this election. He points out that the U.S. full bias toward the "Zionist enemy" is not in the interest of the U.S. future in the region or in the Islamic world, because the issue of Palestine concerns all Muslims.

Turning to elections in the Arab world, Mashshur notes that in some Arab states elections are not carried at all while in places where elections are carried they are fraught with intervention by the authorities, fraud, and regrettable incidents. After warning the Arab rulers against the danger posed by the U.S.-backed Zionist enemy, Mashhur urges them to eliminate inter-Arab differences and to get together in a summit to confront this "ferocious enemy" and stop normalization with it. He adds: "The Arab and Islamic governments are required to work toward restoring confidence with their peoples, eliminating the gap between them, and holding free elections that may produce governments that truly represent the peoples, so that these peoples may provide strong support for their governments against any external aggression. So, unleash freedoms and do not shackle them by laws, oppression, and injustice, for freedom is precious. Do not gag mouths and do not get disturbed by an opposition voice, for it could bring much good to the homeland." Mashhur urges the rulers to follow God's shari'ah, adding that doing so will earn them God's support and the backing of their people.

Turning to Egypt, Mashhur notes that Egypt enjoys a special standing among the Arab, Islamic, and African countries, but for this standing to remain Egypt must serve as a model in unleashing freedoms, ending martial law, and suspending the military trials of civilians, particularly the Muslim Brothers. He notes that time has proved that the Muslim Brothers are loyal to their homeland and stay away from "any violence or race for power." Their main concern, he adds, is to see the Islamic shari'ah applied as the exemplary solution for all the problems of society and to seek the liberation of Palestine, no matter how long this takes.

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IRAN'S REVIVAL OF SILK ROAD VIEWED

Muhammad Jamal 'Arafah, in an approximately 600-word column on page 7, views Iran's inauguration on 13 May of a 295-km long railroad linking it to Central Asia. The writer notes that this project is of extreme strategic importance for Iran and the Islamic world, for it constitutes part of the old silk road linking the Islamic world, will help strengthen Iran's ties with the Central European states, and will provide a chance for Iran to break the Western siege imposed on its foreign trade. 'Arafah points out that Iran's external trade is now threatened by the presence of the U.S. and European fleets in the Gulf. Accordingly, the revival of the silk road gives the Iranians "an important trade back route" as an alternative to the Gulf route, he adds, noting that the inauguration of this railroad constitutes a "heavy defeat" for the Americans in their "brutal war" to besiege Iran.

WRITER PRAISES POLITICAL FREEDOMS IN ISRAEL

Islamic writer Muhammad 'Abd-al-Quddus, in an approximately 700-word column on page 12, notes that the State of Israel is stronger than all the dilapidated Arab regimes in the region, not only because the United States is behind it, but also because the Jews have managed to create a "modern" and "democratic" society, something that is missing in the Arab world. Noting that "our enemies have succeeded where we have failed," 'Abd-al-Quddus explains that Israel does not know the kind of "despotic" regimes we have. Any quick comparison between the Israeli and Egyptian elections will show how "backward" we are, he notes. He adds: "It is my belief that the domestic strength of Israel stems from two specific things: A solid religious doctrine on which the state is based and a modern democratic regime that adopts all the requirements of progress and does not allow an individual or a party to monopolize power. In our country, however, the first enemy of our rulers at present is the Islamic current, and the Islamic trials are the best proof of this. Our president's monopoly of power needs no evidence."

Palestinian Affairs

Palestinian Affairs: 'Secret' Contacts With Likud Denied

JN0506194396 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1300 GMT 5 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Hikmat Zayd, member of the Legislative Council, today denied any secret contacts between the National Authority [NA] and the PLO on the one hand and the Likud on the other. In statements to Voice of Palestine, Zayd said that a meeting was held between him and members of the Israeli Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Security Committee under member of Knesset Ari'el Sharon. Zayd added that the meeting was held when he was the governor of Janin and that it dealt with the Israeli army redeployment and problems facing the Palestinian citizens in Janin as a result of the frequent closures. He stressed that it was a meeting between the NA and members of Knesset. Zayd said he was surprised and annoyed by such matters at this time in particular. He emphasized that he submitted a detailed report to the Palestinian leadership then.

Israeli sources claimed that meetings between the NA and the Likud were stopped so as not to disturb the relationship between the NA and the Labor Party.

Palestinian Affairs: Israel Warned Not To Take Any Measures Against Orient House

JN0506193996 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1300 GMT 5 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Orient House warned against any measures by the Israeli occupation authorities against Palestinian institutions in occupied Jerusalem, including Orient House. It says any such measures will deal a fatal blow to the peace process. A statement issued by the Orient House press office hopes that no obstacles will be placed before the peace process. The statement stresses this institution's important role in supporting the peace process.

Palestinian Affairs: Qaddumi Pessimistic About Future of Peace Process

NC0506182696 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1700 GMT 5 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Tunis, 5 Jun (MENA)—Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department who is opposed to the Oslo Agreement, has affirmed that he is prepared to meet with new Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu if he is received as the foreign minister of Palestine.

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In remarks to a MENA correspondent in Tunis, Qaddumi expressed his pessimism about the coming stage of the peace process following Netanyahu's victory. He stressed that the region will experience one of the toughest and most difficult eras because of Israel's intransigence, particularly following the victory of the extremist Israeli parties.

Qaddumi added: This means that bringing together these extremist forces or creating an understanding among them over the peace process will not be easy, because the generals in these parties have won. This means that the Israelis have voted for the hard-line and extremist stances, he added. Qaddumi noted that the slogans used by the Likud during the election campaign clearly show that the peace track has reached a dead end following Netanyahu's victory on this political platform.

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Algeria

Algeria: Zeroual Appoints New Commander of Second Military District

LD0506181596 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 5 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A National Defense Ministry statement said that Mr. Liamine Zeroual, president of the republic, supreme commander of the armed forces and national defense minister, has appointed Brigadier General Kemal Abderrahmane as commander of the Second Military District [western Algeria] succeeding Major General Mohamed Bekouche, who was assigned to other duties.

Within this framework, Lieutenant General Mohamed Lamari, the chief of staff of the People's National Army, today installed Brigadier General Kemal Abderrahmane in his new responsibilities.

Algeria: Religious Affairs Minister Condemns Murders of Monks

LD0406194096 Paris Radio France International in French 1730 GMT 4 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In Algeria, in accordance with the wishes of their families, the funeral of the seven French monks murdered by the GIA [Armed Islamic Group] took place this morning in Tibehirine Monastery in the strictest privacy. [passage omitted]

Our special correspondent Laurent Chaffard today met the Algerian Minister of Religious Affairs, Ahmed Merani, who made the following comments:

[Begin Merani recording] They are savages, they are barbarians. It is an act which is.... [pauses] condemn with all the strength, all the vigor with which it can be condemned. This is not acceptable.

However, what one can say is that those people who have been killed may have left their bodies but I believe that they are with God now. The people who killed them will also die one day or another, perhaps they will die a violent death, just as they inflicted violent death. I believe that their punishment will be a mighty punishment. It is God.... [pauses] because God does not accept such barbaric acts. [end recording]

Algeria: FIS European Supporters Issue Newsletter

MS0306132396 Southall THE ENLIGHTENMENT in English 27 May 96

[Newsletter "publicizing the Islamic Struggle in Algeria," published by Islamic Salvation Front "supporters in Europe"—quotation marks as received; received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Toward the institutionalisation of the dictatorship! Praise be to Allah.

To have a better picture of the trend of events in country like Algeria today, one may need to look at the situation over a period of at least few years.

The Algerian "drama" started by the popular uprising of the 5 October 1988 after which the regime was forced to give to the people their rights of association including in the political domain by establishing political parties. The experience was what it was. After all the intrigues and deceptions, it was ended following the free legislative elections where a real political lay out of Algeria was faithfully represented by a handful of parties despite the military regime plot to delude the people voice in more than sixty political parties. The first free choice was not what some Generals in the army high command wanted it to be and a process of reversing the people decision started with the objective of never letting the people vote otherwise than what the military regime considers as a "good vote". So, the military regime plan started by answering the question of "how to move from a situation where the FIS has won a majority of votes" to a situation of "there is no FIS in the game and the military regime voice is the "people" choice with a General metamorphosed into a president". The military regime would have never dreamed of embarking in this "surrealist" scheme trying to "kick out" the victorious party from the game all together if it was not assured of the support of those with short sighted egocentric and selfish views which have nothing to do with the Algerian people interest nor with their own long term ones. Those supporters of unjust regimes seem to say to the oppressed people: "only revolutions can make us change our minds"!

But how can the military regime go about forcing the situation or at least its visible aspect?

The military regime is facing two fronts: a domestic or internal audience and more importantly an international "audience" which participate in making the decision of providing necessary "oxygen" each time the regime approach asphyxia. The military regime plan is made up of different phases and each one containing the product (how to stay in power for ever), the packaging ("legal" and "legitime" covers such as the "General Zeroual elections", new constitution...) and a marketing strategy (propaganda which brightens the regime's image and tarnish that of its opponents).

Each time the military regime is about to implement one of its political program, the "violence" agenda

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of carefully selected targets becomes very intense. Its objectives is the public opinion. Internally to discredit all political opposition that dares oppose and externally, to facilitate supports to the military regime policy.

Today the military regime is embarked in the last phase of "the dictatorship institutionalisation" and for that it needs to "get out of the way" a substantial part of the opposition which is represented by the FIS so it can deals with the remaining more easily. For that, the regime propaganda and its notorious secret police "La S.M" are working toward the objective of "breaking" the political parties members of the "national contract" from the FIS.

When internal implosion of such party and change of leadership is not possible, the regime does not hesitate to opt for selected murders of heavy symbolic weight, in order to put pressure on the party leaders from the base upwards. The repugnant assassination last week of a women whose husband was a member of the FFS is one example amongst many. During such period, all actions of the military regime's government become at the exclusive service of the propaganda. The now very frequent media appearance of the military regime prime minister Ouyahyia cultivating hatred amongs the Algerian people and congratulating on each occasions the criminals of the armed militia set up by the regime to complicate any return to a normal situation and to diverge the struggle from that of people/regime conflict to that of people/people one, is a good illustration.

As for the international audience and in order to facilitate support for the military regime "eradication" plan there is nothing better than the revolting murder of seven monks last week to be put in the account of Islamists in particular and Islam in general. The elimination of political Islam from the competition thus becomes "politically correct" and acceptable since Islamists are just a bunch of assassins of the lowest type. Last week declaration of the Jordanian government is a good example where the jump from condemning the repugnant murder to that of supporting General Zeroual policies was too easily made. This interference in Algerian internal affairs at this time where the opposition has not spoken yet can not be tolerated from regimes such as the Jordanian's be it of a "Hachemite" origin!

What the supporters of the policy of exclusion forget sometimes is that the military regime may "cash in" some more "financial dividends" (for the Algerian people to pay back later on) by organising legislative elections prepared by it and for it, but this can not ends the Algerian tragedy just as the "presidential elections" did not even with the substantial pouring of financial "assistance" that immediately followed the "elections".

The policy of exclusion and the political "unilateralism" may on the other hand destroy the last remaining "exit card" for Algeria. The other "card" of the last "presidential elections" has already been waisted away due to the stubbornness of those who don't want a real sovereignty for the Algerian people given peacefully and without blood, anarchy or revolution!

History has taught those who want to learn that, Injustice finishes always by being overthrown, most of the time when least expected and under the most unwanted kind of conditions.

For whom the scandalous murders of the Trappist monks, works!

Islam is clear as crystal on the way to behave with saints and worshippers of other religions in peace as well as in war. The most explicit. Historical case at time of war came from the closest companion of the Prophet (p.b.u.h) [peace be upon him] and the first man to enter Islam, Abu Bakr "As-Siddiq" (may Allah be pleased with him).

At the time of departure of the Islamic army to the battle against the Romans (Byzantines), Abu Bakr gave some valuable advice to each commander. A few of them are as under:

— Always fear Allah because He knows what the heart conceal.
— Treat your subordinates well.
— Honour the representatives of your enemies.
— Always be truthful.
— Keep away from untruthful men and be intimate with those who are truthful and faithful.
— Do not be dishonest in any way.
— Do not DISTURB SAINTS AND WORSHIPPERS of other religions.
— Do not destroy places of worship.
— Do not kill a woman, an old man and children and those who are not fighting with you (i,e civilians).
— Do not cut flowering trees.
— Do not ruin any populated place.
— Do not kill goats, camels and cattle besides what you need to eat.
— Do not burn gardens.
— Do not be dishonest in booty.

In the above valuable advice, one can find the essence of Islamic teachings during war. Islam has the highest possible "ethic" during war as well as peace.

Seven Trappist monks were kidnapped from their monastery in the region of Medea (Algeria) and were

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later assassinated according to a communique attributed to the armed group GIA [Armed Islamic Group]. Amongst the monks, few have been in that monastery since 1946 as is the case of doctor Luc Dochier who was 82 years old. This monastery was known to have provided medical assistance to the local population as well as to the Mujahidin. Yet in 1993 and before the regime secret police ("La S.M") reached the GIA "brain", a well known respected leaders of the GIA, Sayah Attia has visited the monastery and had apply the proper Islamic teaching, telling the monks that there are safe from any Mujahedeen mischiefs. Sayed Attia as many other sincere Mujahidin leaders, was killed "deep in the mountains" in a place accessible to "Mujahidin" only. The Military regime propaganda has tried everything to project a repulsive image of Sayah Attia. He was described as "the butcher of Medea" and the one who "slaughter his victims with unsharpened saw". When the news of his killing went out, the propaganda told the Algerian people that everybody was very happy with the news including...HIS OWN MOTHER! It was embarrassing for the regime propaganda when the visit to the monastery and the behaviour of Sayeh was related to the media by one of the monks representative in Algeria. Even now and after the French officials call to all their nationals including people of religion to leave Algeria, the monk order representatives are still saying "we have absolutely no problem with the muslims in Algeria". This is a very clear message even if it is a little bit codded.

The war which is raging in Algeria makes that country the "hottest point" on earth. However, it is a war without images and some wanting it without witnesses. Algeria has become like a theatre stage with lights off. The international "audience" try to have a picture of what was going on by...listening to sounds. In this war of shadows, some have become expert in voice imitation. They can make people believe whatever they want to by providing the "right sound". Once in a while a small "crack" is open through which some lights come out. Some of them are "natural", some are "artificial" and some are a "mixture". It is not always easy to identify the nature of each light that come trough the "crack".

The story of the abdominal assassination of the monks is more complicated than what it seems and one day, propably in the far future, may be the truth will come out. However, the only reasonable observation one can make is that this sad story reflect a "multi-layer" manipulation and counter-manipulation involving experts in the domain of "underground war". The involvement of the military regime secret police is more than certain at least during the delivery of the "kidnappers" message to the French embassy and the transport of the "French emissary" from Algiers to the mountains of Medea where he met the monks in a cave before they were killed.

Algeria News and comments

The principal political parties do not approve Gen. Zeroual agenda!

The Algerian principal political parties have rejected General Zeroual's agenda which consists of calling for a referundum on a new constitution. This constitution is already being called "General Zeroual constitution" given its unilatteral elaboration with very tight room left for the opposition to add a "touch". Even the organisation of the Muhjahidin (of 1954-62 war) did not agree on the agenda in a meeting under the nevrosity of the chain-smoker (live on TV) ex-president of the "State councile" Kaffi.

The wave of strikes continues!

After the Algerian airlines Air Algerie job action which is still going on, it was the turn of ports and airports customs workers to go on strike despite the disapproval of its syndicate organisation leadership known to be in the "pocket" of the military regime's government. The workers are asking for wages increases as they can not cope anymore with a hyperinflation that is taking place in the Algerian real market. Keeping wages low in that vital sector of the Algerian economy is indeed calling for corruption to be generalised. By wanting to save a little money on the back of the customs workers, Mr Ouyahyia may end up loosing for Algeria a lot. Talking a lot about corruption and doing nothing to prevent it, is a very close definition of demagogy!

The Algerian newspapers start to react to the imminently coming asphyxia!

Sixteen newspapers representing what is known as the private press have written and published an open letter to General Zeroual complaining about censorship and asking for the end of the State monopoly on the press printing industry. Indeed the military regime has initiated a new method of censorship which consists of having "reading committees" at each printing factory which stope any newspaper, the committee may think the Algerian people ought not read.

The military regime has already put the complete muzzling of the Algerian media in its agenda despite the help some of them have been providing the regime with since 1992. In order to put their point across, some did not hesitate to be more "loyalist than the king" and hitting the Islamists hard by tarnishing their image as is shown by the amalgam cultivated in the declaration

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of one of the newspaper director last week calling all "muslim fundamentalists" as assassins saying:

"In my country the journalist is hunted, murdered, thrown into prison and censored. He is subjected, a rare occurrence in the history of the world press, at one and the same time to persecution by Muslim fundamentalists and public authorities."

Some of them will probably one day be saying:"they came after the Islamists voice and I helped because I was not an Islamist, then they came after the "national contract" voice and I helped because I was opposed to that alliance, then they came after.and I helped, now they are after me and there is no one left to help me!"

The newpapers have also called for a one day strike.

The chief propaganda minister Mihoubi has pointed out that real channels of communication did exist, nowadays, between public authorities and professionals of the private and public press. He added that real freedom of the press did exist in Algeria. Meantime Mr Mihoubi is cooking a new "Information code" to dictate to the Algerian people what to write, say and read.

The French Communist party interference in the Algerian internal affairs!

The national secretary of the French Communist party Mr Robert Hue has called for France backing to the "Algerian progressists" (probably meaning the communists) against what he called "the fundamentalist". There are politicians who do not even have the decency not to take advantage of the scandalous murders of the seven monks and the communist party national secretary is undoubtedly one of them!

The FFS to the General Zeroual's "propositions": Negation of democracy, globally and in details!

The first public reaction to General Zeroual "propositions" came from the political party the FFS which First secretary Mr Seddik Debaili said amongst other things: "The FFS rejects the unilaterally imposed course of action globally and in details." "The FFS is decided to engage in a sincere dialogue and without preconditions with the view of a global, peaceful and democratic political solution." Mr Debaili has estimated that: "the false solutions preconised will put the country under a "constitutional dictatorship" if they were to be implemented and this is the very negation of Democracy itself."

Algeria still "dipping" in self-destruction!

According to an Algerian newspaper, railways tracks connecting the cities of Algiers and Tizi Ouzzou were damaged by the explosion of a bombe near the locality of Bordj Manaiel. The explosion took place during the night of Friday/Saturday. This unique railways tracks in that direction was classed to traffic.

Egypt

Egypt: Egyptian-Syrian-Saudi Summit To Be Held in Damascus 7 Jun

NC0606101696 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1000 GMT 6 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif stated that the tripartite summit that embraces Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Syria will be held in Damascus tomorrow morning.

President Husni Mubarak yesterday said that the tripartite would be held tomorrow, Friday [7 June].

Egypt: Envoy—Netanyahu To Visit Late Jun, Early Jul

NC0606080096 Cairo MENA in English 0648 GMT 6 Jun 96

[From the press review]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, 6 Jun (MENA)—AL-AHRAM reported that President Mubarak sent a message to Netanyahu on means of pushing forward the Middle East peace process.

The message was handed over yesterday to Netanyahu by Egypt's ambassador to Israel, the paper said.

Basyuni was quoted by the paper as saying that Netanyahu intends to visit Cairo either late this month or early in July, following the formation of the new Israeli Government.

Basyuni told AL-AHRAM following his meeting with Netanyahu that the latter will meet during his first ever visit to Cairo with President Mubarak to get acquainted with Egypt's views as regards pushing forward the peace process.

Egypt: Envoy to Israel Comments on Meeting With Netanyahu

NC0606094596 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0900 GMT 6 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Egyptian ambassador to Israel Muhammad Basyuni has stated that his meeting with Israeli Prime Minister-elect Binyamin Netanyahu yesterday evening was the second in one week, following the announcement of Natanyahu's win in the elections. He said that his meeting with Netanyahu is within the framework of consultations and contacts he is holding with the Israeli leaders and officials to explore the new

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situation. He said that Netanyahu confirmed to him that he will abide by the pledges that Israel signed and that he seeks to bolster bilateral ties with Egypt. He noted that Netanyahu underlined his understanding and appreciation that Egypt, led by President Husni Mubarak, is the key to making peace in the Middle East.

Egypt: Jordanian Minister on Egyptian-Jordanian 'Strategic' Ties

NC0506131796 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1215 GMT 5 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] al-'Aqabah, 5 Jun (MENA)—Jordanian Information Minister Marwan al-Mu'ashshir stressed that the Egyptian-Jordanian relationship has become a strategic relationship, adding that coordination between Egypt and Jordan, particularly over the peace process, is now regular and well-established. He added that the two countries' strategic view toward all matters is identical.

In remarks to MENA, al-Mu'ashshir pointed out that Jordan appreciates Egypt's stance, particularly since it started the peace process a long time ago. He added: We would like to maintain and consolidate the coordination, particularly with the Palestinian side, during the final stage of negotiations.

Al-Mu'ashshir praised Egypt's role in restoring Arab solidarity, adding that we strongly support this endeavor and hope that the ongoing moves will signal the start of a common Arab action that prepares the ground for restoring Arab solidarity. The Jordanian minister stressed that his country backs any call to expand the inter-Arab meetings to the summit level and supports any summit. He hoped that these meetings will create an atmosphere leading to an Arab summit in the future.

Egypt: Musa—No Need for Alliances if We Really Want Peace

NC0506113596 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1030 GMT 5 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 5 Jun (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has said that Egypt is waiting for the new Israeli Government, headed by Likud Leader Binyamin Netanyahu, to be formed. He pointed out that Egypt will not jump the gun; Egypt believes that the statements made so far are the result of the election campaign in Israel.

He noted in an interview with the [French language newspaper] AL-AHRAM HEBDO published today that the Likud is the party that signed the peace agreement with Egypt and that the Israeli people want a government that will continue the peace process.

The foreign minister clarified that Egypt's role is to help push the peace process forward. This depends on Israel's desire to establish peace, adhere to its pledges toward the Palestinians, and negotiate with the Syrians.

On Egypt's stance regarding the Turkish-Israeli military agreement, the foreign minister said that Egypt's stance is clear. It consists of the following: If we want peace, there is no need for military alliances or axes against any country.

'Amr Musa added that the peace process must lead to direct and positive contacts. The atmosphere of alliances will immediately create counter-alliances. Every action has a reaction.

On whether he is convinced by the assurances he received during his latest visit to Ankara, the Egyptian foreign minister said: We accept the assurances that were given to us and there is no reason for us to believe that what we heard from the highest ranking Turkish authorities is not true. However, nevertheless, we still follow up the situation very carefully, because it concerns the security of Egypt and the Middle East.

He added that Israel must realize that its security lies in establishing peaceful relations and making the region accept it. Real peace is based on normal relations and equality among all countries in the region.

With regard to opportunities for Arab reconciliation in the near future, 'Amr Musa said that the bitter feelings brought about by the Gulf War are still there. Egypt is trying as hard as it can to achieve some rapprochement among the Arab countries. He confirmed that Arab reconciliation tops Egypt's priorities, particularly since we live in an age of economic groupings.

With regard to the chances of a peaceful settlement of the conflict between Yemen and Eritrea, the foreign minister said that the Declaration of Principles between the two parties paves the way for a diplomatic solution. Egypt, for its part, will continue to work on facilitating the final settlement.

He praised the help France is offering in order to accomplish a peaceful and just solution in the Middle East and in the conflict between Eritrea and Yemen over the Hanish islands. He said that relations between Egypt and France are growing stronger and deeper.

The foreign minister described Europe's role in the Middle East peace process as very important with regard to finding a balanced solution.

'Amr Musa categorically denied that the Peacemakers' Conference, which convened in Sharm al-Shaykh, gave Israel the green light to attack Lebanon. He explained

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that the Israeli elections played a role in this aggression, which brought about negative reactions from Arab public opinion. It also did not benefit any of the parties involved.

Libya

Libya: Al-Qadhdhafi Addresses General People's Congress

LD0506232596

[FBIS Summary] Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic at 1935 GMT on 5 June broadcasts an 85-minute live speech by Libyan leader Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi to the General People's Congress in Surt.

Al-Qadhdhafi focuses his address on the need to fight against speculators, traffickers, and idle people who are damaging the national economy. He insists on implementing the revolutionary legality and the laws of the Jamahiriyah to punish these people. He calls on every individual to assume his or her responsibility in the development of the country and respect the laws of the country. Every activity must be undertaken according to law.

As a warning to those who might ignore the importance of the decisions and laws approved by the People's Congresses, al-Qadhdhafi says: "The coordinator of the people's leadership is your leader in your region. He is the one who will lead to the battle because he is your leader in your region and and will execute anyone who would say no." He goes on: "The coordinator of the people's leadership in the region is the supreme leader of the region. All means are at his disposal for general mobilization. He is in charge of everything and nobody can say no to him. Anyone who would say no will be seen as a collaborator of the enemy. He [the coordinator] has the right to kill him with bullets, often without a trial or with a summary trial lasting no more than a few minutes. The revolution would be doomed without this.

"This is all about establishing the power of the people. From now on, military committees and revolutionary forces must intervene. This is a warning that the people's authority must be respected, the people's committees must carry out their tasks, responsible before and obeying the congresses."

Continuing the theme of mobilization and the need to be aware of the external danger, al-Qadhdhafi says: "Every Libyan should belong to a regional defense force. Everyone must be trained militarily. There are training centers in every region for general military training. People must take part in drills; groups of people must successively undertake military training every year. These training periods could take place in the institutions of the Jamahiriyah, such as the popular defense training centers and general military training centers."

Turning to the recent Israeli-Lebanese crisis, al-Qadhdhafi says said the mass killings ordered by Peres for electoral purposes were in vain as he lost those elections but the losers are the Lebanese and Palestinian people. He says that what happened in Lebanon was contrary to international law and the charters of the United Nations and the Arab League.

Al-Qadhdhafi then reverts to his main economic theme, denouncing the speculators as the enemies of the people and the revolution. The latter must be permanent in order to defeat them, he says, and 1 September 1969 must be permanently present and every day must be the starting day of the revolution. He urges the people to work hard because only hard work can lead to prosperity and development.

The Libyan leader concludes by speaking at length about the need to rationalize the social and economic needs of the country so as to cut waste.

Libya: Algerian Islamic Front Activists 'Disappeared' in Libya

MM0506134796 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 5 Jun 96 pp 1, 6

[Report by Kamil al-Tawil: "Algerian Islamic Sources: 500 'Salvation Front' Members 'Disappeared' in Libya"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London — AL-HAYAH has learned from Algerian Islamic sources that several hundred Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] members and supporters have "disappeared" in Libya over the past two months, and that the outlawed front is making contacts to unravel the clues to their disappearance and the possibility that they might have been handed over to the Algerian Government.

The sources pointed out that hundreds of Algerians fled to Libya with their families when the confrontations started between the Algerian regime and the FIS following the cancellation of the first round of legislative elections in January 1992. The sources added that many of those who fled to Libya had been held for some time in the Rakan [as transliterated] detention center in the Algerian desert, and that they decided to leave the country after their release in stages in 1993 and 1994.

The sources said that hundreds of the Algerians fleeing the country applied for asylum after their arrival in Libya, and that the issue of their residence was settled later.

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The sources said that the Algerians' "disappearances" in Libya started in the early months of this year and peaked in April. The sources said that some 500 men have disappeared, no member of their families has been harmed, and their families have contacted the Libyan authorities but in vain. Officials in the competent Libyan organs initially denied any link with the young Algerians' disappearance, but as a result of the families' persistence, they said that "the issue is political."

The sources said that the Algerian families taking refuge in Libya are concerned over the fate of their sons, especially the possibility of their extradition to Algeria, which is bound to Libya by staunch relations. The sources declined to provide a list of the men who have disappeared. However, they said that a list is being made and that the FIS is making contacts with more than one quarter concerning their fate. The sources said that the FIS will publish a list of the "abducted" persons if its efforts to ascertain their fate fail.

The sources confirmed that a number of FIS officials are among those who have "disappeared," including the head of "an Islamic municipality" (one of the municipalities run by the FIS after its victory in the local elections in 1990 and which the regime dissolved in 1992), a member of the FIS regional executive office, and another FIS official who is sentenced to death. The sources said that most of those who have "disappeared" are either members or supporters of the FIS.

As is known, Algeria and Libya are currently bound by staunch security and political ties. There was coolness in their relations after the cancellation of the 1992 elections in Algeria and the start of Algerian oppositionists' emigration to Libya.

The Algerian press wrote repeatedly about the foiling of large-scale arms smuggling operations into Algeria across the border with Libya. The press — especially in 1994 and 1995 — said that "convoys" carrying arms move from Sudan to Libya on their way to Algeria.

But coolness in relations has been eliminated since Major General Liamine Zeroual's assumption of power in Algeria. Zeroual visited Tripoli in September 1994 to attend the celebrations marking the anniversary of Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi's assumption of power in 1969. On the periphery he held a summit meeting with Sudanese President 'Umar al-Bashir, whose country had bad relations with Algeria.

It has been noted for some time that Col. al-Qadhdhafi, whose regime is also facing growing Islamic opposition, has begun to take tough stands toward Islamic movements. In this context the Libyan leader, in an interview with the Dubai satellite channel, accused the Islamic groups of being agents for U.S. intelligence services.

Libya has for some time been experiencing an escalation in opposition operations, and a movement calling itself the Militant Libyan Group [al-jama'ah al-libiyah al-muqatilah] claimed responsibility a few months ago for an attempt on the Libyan leader's life during his visit to Surt. There were also reports of bloody clashes in east Libya, especially in Banghazi, between Libyan security forces and opposition groups, most of which are Islamic groups.

Mauritania

Mauritania: French Cooperation Minister Arrives 5 Jun

AB0606104396 Paris AFP in French 1806 GMT 5 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] French Foreign Minister Jacques Godfrain arrived in Nouakchott this afternoon for his first visit to Mauritania. During his 48-hour visit, a French source indicates, Mr. Godfrain will sign three financial conventions worth 15.7 million French francs on environment (FF4.7 million) on decentralization (FF10 million) and a one-million grant for the organization of legislative election in Mauritania in October.

The most important of these conventions on the environment sector, is to finance a support project for the conservation and the rehabilitation of the ecosystem of the Ban d'Arguin, a vast breeding ground for fish in the Atlantic Ocean north-west of Nouakchott and where millions of birds come to nest every year.

This project, which is expected to cost five million French francs over a four-year period, is aimed at reinforcing the management of the Ban d'Arguin national park, classified world heritage and which plays an essential role in the renewal of fish reserves.

Mr. Godfrain is to go on a private visit to the Aleg region (in the south of the country) this evening. He will go to the Ban d'Arguin on 6 June. He will later be received by Mauritanian President Maaouiya Ould Sid' Ahmed Taya and will hold talks with Mauritianian Foreign Minister Sidi Mahmoud Ould Cheikh.

At the end of his sojourn, Mr. Godfrain will hand over a batch of drugs to the Mauritanian authorities to help them fight the cholera epidemic in the River Senegal basin. He will also take part in the ceremony during which one of the two ATR aircraft bought from France will be handed over to Mauritania.

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Morocco

Morocco: 'Thousands' of Workers Hold 24-Hour Strike

LD0506151696 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 5 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In Morocco, thousands of workers today took part in the 24-hour general strike called by the Democratic Labour Confederation [CDT] and the General Union of Moroccan Workers. The two trade unions call for wage rises, the reinstatement of workers sacked for trade union activities; the setting up of a fund to help the unemployed; and the generation of the collective agreements to all workers. [passage omitted].

Morocco: Widespread Support for Strike Reported

LD0506184796 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 5 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] It has been learned from Moroccan trade union sources that a large proportion of the striking workers [as heard] took part in the 24-hour general strike which the Democratic Labor Confederation and the General Union of Moroccan Workers called for, and that it took place in ordinary conditions and normal circumstances.

The same sources added that the participation rate in the strike was between 90-100 percent, and that it found support among the various Moroccan national sections, including the merchants.

Morocco: Riots Erupt in Tangier

LD0506222496 Paris Radio France International in French 2130 GMT 5 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Two Moroccan trade unions called for a 24-hour strike today. The strike was well supported in the economic capital Casablanca but had less support in other towns. The Confederation of Labor and the General Union of Workers in Morocco wanted thus to put pressures on the authorities. [passage omitted]

Riots broke out in Tangier on the occasion of this day of protest. A bank was burned down and another one was ransacked. The police have arrested 22 people.

Morocco: 2,000 Demonstrators Clash With Police in Tangier

LD0506224496 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2200 GMT 5 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Violent clashes have taken place this afternoon between the Moroccan police forces and about 2,000 demonstrators in the Moroccan city of Tangier. The demonstrators caused damage to two banks in the popular street of Beni Makada in Tangier. [passage omitted]

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GCC: Head Criticizes Attempts To Disturb Security in Gulf

LD0506133096 Riyadh SPA in English 1233 GMT 5 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Riyadh, June 5, SPA — Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] Jamil al-Hujaylan has expressed anxiety over attempts, which are aimed at undermining Bahrain's stability and said such attempts to disturb the pillars of security in the Gulf region run counter to the international laws and norms.

In a press statement, al-Hujaylan said Bahrain, like the other member states of the GCC, has established its foreign policy on the principles of respect of the rights of the neighbouring countries and non-interference in their domestic affairs.

The security and stability of the GCC member states are indivisible, he said. 'The existing bonds of fraternity among the GCC states and their governments' realization of this reality, will remain an element for stability and security for this great Arab political entity that has been working for the security and stability of the nations of the region,' he added.

Bahrain

Bahrain: 'Confessions' of 6 Suspected Plotters Carried on State TV

NC0506180096 Paris AFP in English 1623 GMT 5 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Manama, June 5 (AFP) — State television on Wednesday [5 June] aired the confessions of six Bahraini Shiite Moslem militants who were charged with trying to overthrow their government with the help of Iran.

The six, who are among 34 who have reportedly confessed to belonging to the military wing of Hizballah-Bahrain, appeared fit as they read out their confessions two days after officials here announced they had foiled the plot.

'Ali Ahmad Kazim al-Mutaqawi said he was first approached in 1993 in the Iranian holy city of Qom by a man sent by Iran's Revolutionary Guards and who later introduced him to a senior intelligence officer named Ahmad Sharifi.

The authorities have accused al-Mutaqawi, who first went to Qom in 1983 to study theology, as being one of Hizballah-Bahrain's chief liaison officers with Iranian intelligence.

He quoted Sharifi as saying: "You, the Bahraini Shia who are studying in Qom and in Bahrain, should work together to topple the political system in Bahrain and call for establishing an Islamic republic loyal to Iran."

"We shall provide you with every support you need," al-Mutaqawi quoted Sharifi as saying.

Sharifi introduced him to an intelligence officer of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard during a meeting which resulted in him receiving money that allowed him to rent a house as well as buy a computer and fax machine.

He said there were many meetings with the Iranians in the house.

"We were constantly urged to bring in more youth and supporters, with an aim to train 3,000 persons" to form a military group which would seize power, al-Mutaqawi said, according to comments carried by the official GULF NEWS AGENCY.

The Bahrainis continued to receive checks which were drawn on the Revolutionary Guard's account at Saderat Bank and which were signed sometimes by Sharifi himself, he added.

Al-Mutaqawi and the other suspects also said they had received military training in Iran and Lebanon.

Since December 1994 Bahrain has been hit by anti-government unrest led by Shiite Moslems demanding a restoration of the parliament that was suspended in 1975 by the Sunni Moslem-led authorities.

At least 22 people have been killed and many others injured in the violence which has included explosions of home-made bombs, firebombings, stabbings and beatings.

Bahrain: Defendants' Confessions Reported

JN0506172296 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1300 GMT 5 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Manama, 5 Jun (WAKH) — The interior Ministry in the State of Bahrain today disclosed the names of those involved in the case of the terrorist organization of the military wing of Hizballah-Bahrain. The ministry had taken down their confessions in front of an examining judge from the moment they joined the organization to the day they were arrested.

The confessions of the defendants confirmed that they joined the terrorist organization which seeks to undermine security and stability in Bahrain, overthrow its regime, and establish a pro-Iranian one.

The interrogation revealed that these defendants chose to sell out and betray their homeland. They worked to establish the military wing of Hizballah-Bahrain at the behest of the Iranian authorities and with their backing

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and financing. However, their plans failed thanks to the security men's vigilance.

Defendant 'Ali Kazim al-Mutaqawwi said he had been residing in Qom since 1983, and that he was pursuing religious studies in Qom's seminary. He said that early in 1993 an Iranian called Abu-Ja'far visited him, informed him he had been sent by a senior intelligence officer in the Al-Quds Forces which are affiliated to the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and that this senior Iranian officer wanted to meet him to discuss the political situation.

Al-Mutaqawwi said that one week later Abu-Ja'far came to his house accompanied by a man whose nom de guerre was Abu-Jalal. Abu-Ja'far told him that Abu-Jalal was the senior intelligence officer in question. Abu-Jalal asked him about the situation in Bahrain and criticized its regime. Abu-Jalal said he represented the Iranian authorities and that he came to speak to him at their instructions.

Abu-Jalal said: You, the Bahraini Shiites who are studying in Qom and Bahrain, should do something to change the regime in Bahrain and establish a pro-Iranian Islamic republic and we are ready to give you all the assistance you need.

Abu-Jalal asked the defendant to sound out other Bahraini students who were pursuing religious studies in Qom and whom he trusted on condition the Iranian authorities remained out of the picture.

'Ali Ahmad Kazim al-Mutaqawwi explained that he initiated consultations with some students, who responded favorably to the idea. Then, Abu-Ja'far visited him and accompanied him for a meeting with Abu-Jalal at the latter's office. Abu-Jalal asked al-Mutqawwi about the outcome of his consultations with the students. Al-Mutqawwi gave Abu-Jalal the names of the students. Abu-Jalal proposed that al-Mutqawwi, along with these students, form the military wing of Hizballah-Bahrain. He told him that the Iranian authorities will extend to them all types of facilities and assistance. He proposed that they form a higher council that will take care of the activities.

'Ali al-Mutaqawwi added that after several consultations, they formed the military council of Hizballah-Bahrain as follows: The financial committee, headed by al-Mutaqawwi, who was also responsible for coordinating with the IRGC; the military training committee, headed by Shaykh 'Adil al-Shu'lah; the information committee, headed by Shaykh Khalil Sultan; and the intelligence and security committee, headed by Jasim Hasan Mansur Hasan al-Khayyat. After some time, they were joined by Shaykh Muhammad Habib Mansur Muhammad, a Bahraini cleric living in Kuwait and whose activity centered on Bahraini students in Kuwait.

'Ali al-Mutaqawwi said that he then met with Officer Abu-Jalal in the latter's office. Abu-Jalal told al-Mutaqawwi that his real name was Ahmad Sharifi. In that meeting, he was introduced to Muhammad Rida al-Sadiqi [name as transliterated], an Intelligence officer in the IRGC. Also in this meeting, he received the first financial assistance which Sharifi said was from the higher Iranian authorities. Al-Mutqawwi said that the money was used in renting a house for their meetings and buying a computer and a facsimile machine.

Al-Mutaqawwi added that they held their meetings in that house and focused on the idea of leadership cadres. After a short while and following arrangements with Abu-Ja'far, Muhammad Safawi, Ahmad Sharifi and Muhammad Rida [names as transliterated] paid a visit to the house. They held a meeting with members of the council and urged them to recruit the largest number of youths in this organization. They focused on training 3,000 youths to serve as the armed popular groundwork, the nucleus of efforts to oust the ruling system in Bahrain through the use of military force. He said that within a short period, they formed a subcouncil that was answerable to the main council formed of Shaykh Makki Habib, Shaykh Munir 'Abd-al-Rasul, Rida Ahmad Ma'tuq, Shaykh Fu'ad al-Mubarak 'Abd-al-'Aziz, Shaykh Muhammad Mansi Yusuf Shabib, and Shaykh Ahmad Amrallah. They held several meetings that were attended by members of the main council and Ahmad Sharifi, the Iranian intelligence man, who stressed the need for keeping the affair secret lest Iran be internationally involved.

Al-Mutaqawwi said that during their contacts with the anti-regime Bahraini Shiites residing in London — such as Sa'id al-Shihabi and Mansur al-Jamri — they briefed them on the activities they had carried out under the supervision and support of the Iranian authorities. Those in London expressed their support. However, they asked that they remain uninvolved, but pledged to extend all kinds of media support.

In April 1993, 'Ali al-Mutaqawwi said that Ahmad Sharifi asked him to send the first batch of Bahrainis residing in Qom — whether they were current or new members of the council — to Karaj camp north of Tehran for military training. So, the first batch was sent and its members underwent training for one month.

Meanwhile, the Iranian authorities continued to extend financial support. Sometimes this aid came in the form of administrative checks drawn on the IRGC's account at Iran's export bank and signed by Ahmad Sharifi. If

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the money was to be used inside Iran it was disbursed in Iranian rials whether cash or checks. If it was going to be used outside Iran, then it was disbursed in U.S. dollars.

Al-Mutaqawwi added that early in November 1994, he and the members of the military council of Hizballah-Bahrain held a meeting which was attended by Ahmad Sharifi, the Iranian intelligence agent. Sharifi asked the members to expand their media activity, particularly in collecting information on Bahrain. He also asked them to set up a media bureau in an area that is geographically close to Bahrain so that it would be easy to contact this bureau from Bahrain as well as from Iran. The IRGC gave Sharifi approximately 20,000 dollars for this task.

Al-Mutaqawwi continued: At the recommendation of Shaykh 'Adil al-Shu'lah, 'Ali 'Abd-al-Amir al-Nashabah was appointed as director of this bureau. The instructions were that the bureau should avoid recruiting any Bahrainis residing in the United Arab Emirates [UAE]. The bureau should also avoid giving military training to members because there is close security cooperation between security authorities in Bahrain and the UAE.

'Ali al-Mutaqawwi said that in 1994 the first batch of Bahrainis to be trained arrived in Iran. They were sent by Muhammad Habib, who runs the operation from Kuwait, to Karaj camp, which is part of the IRGC. The second batch arrived in September.

Al-Mutaqawwi said that in January 1995 he held a secret meeting with Ahmad Sharifi who said that he would accompany him to Tehran to meet the IRGC's al-Quds Forces commander; in other words he would meet the head of the IRGC intelligence director in order to discuss the issue of Bahrain with him. And indeed he did. He and Ahmad Sharifi met with a man named Wahidi, who told him that he works directly under the Imam Khamene'i, the spiritual leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and that he receives his orders directly from him.

Bahrain: Opposition Group Charges Government Torture in Confessions

NC0506213496 Paris AFP in English 2111 GMT 5 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Nicosia, June 5 (AFP) — Bahrain's main opposition group charged authorities Wednesday [5 June] with torturing the confessions out of six Shiite Moslem militants accused of trying to overthrow the government with help from Iran.

"The Interior Ministry has lost its nerve, dragging several persons under torture and ordering them to read prepared 'confessions' depicting a fictitious picture of a non-existent organization and an invalid involvement of a foreign government," the Bahrain Freedom Movement said in a statement.

The London-based group, in statement received in Nicosia, challenged the authorities to allow independent observers from human rights organizations to verify the conditions of those who confessed.

"If Bill Clinton had been subjected to 15 minutes of torture of the type used in Bahraini jails, he would have confessed to being the head of the intercontinental missiles committee of Hizballah," the movement said, in a joking reference to the Iranian-backed Shiite Moslem group in Lebanon.

Bahraini state television on Wednesday aired the confessions of six Shiite Moslem militants, who are among 34 who reportedly confessed to belonging to a group called the military wing of Hizballah-Bahrain.

They appeared fit as they read out their lengthy confessions two days after officials in Bahrain announced they had foiled the plot.

They told in detail how Tehran recruited Bahrainis studying in Iran from 1993 to build up a secret organisation to bring down the Manama government.

One also implicated a leading Bahraini opponent, Shaykh 'Abd-al-Amir al-Jamri, in the plot and the 18 months of anti-government unrest which has rocked the Gulf island state.

Bahrain: Minister on Iranian 'Interference,' Fallout

MM0506155896 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 5 Jun 96 pp 1,6

[Interview with Muhammad Ibrahim al-Mutawwa', Bahraini minister for cabinet affairs and information minister, by Bari'ah 'Alam-al-Din in Manama; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] ['Alam-al-Din] Does your government intend to send memorandums to the major Western states such as the United States, Britain, and France to inform them of the developments in and the outcome of the issue of the incidents in Bahrain and Iran's involvement in them?

[Al-Mutawwa'] I do not think that there is any need to undertake such a step now. Foreign Minister Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Mubarak has initiated a series of measures and diplomatic steps to inform the world of the situation. He led meetings yesterday with the ambassadors of the superpowers and of other states. If, in the

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future, we see that there is a need to send official envoys to these states, we shall do so.

['Alam-al-Din] The government of Bahrain has informed the governments of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] states of the developments in the incidents in Bahrain. What is these states' position on these developments?

[Al-Mutawwa'] The brotherly GCC states' response was and still is extremely positive. The are all backing the state, the people, and the security and stability of Bahrain. They all understand the issue very well and fully support Bahrain in all the decisions and measures that it will undertake to tackle the situation, which harms not just Bahrain's security and stability but also the stability and security of neighboring states and the states of the region as a whole.

['Alam-al-Din] The Bahraini education minister is touring Egypt, Jordan, and Syria to deliver messages from Shaykh 'Isa Bin-Salman Al Khalifah, amir of the state of Bahrain, to King Husayn, President Mubarak, and President al-Asad. Why do you not send an envoy to Lebanon, now that it has been officially announced here that members of Hizballah-Bahrain were training in Lebanon?

[Al-Mutawwa'] There is continuous consultation at all levels, and messages will be exchanged with all Arab and friendly states on the developments in this issue.

['Alam-al-Din] Did you make any specific requests to Jordan, Syria, and Egypt?

[Al-Mutawwa'] We did not make any specific requests to any of them. We are merely trying to convey the facts and explain the situation to their leaders.

['Alam-al-Din] In view of what has been officially announced in Bahrain, how do you foresee the next phase?

[Al-Mutawwa'] We hope that the Iranians can weigh the consequences of their interference in other states' internal affairs, its threats to the security and stability of the region, and its negative impact on good-neighborly relations. We sincerely hope that Iran reviews its policy toward its neighbors.

['Alam-al-Din] The volume of information being revealed daily about Iran's interference in the internal affairs of states in the region is increasing. The latest information is what was published yesterday with regard to Iranian weapons transiting via the UAE on their way to Saudi Arabia. Do you have any information regarding these issues?

[Al-Mutawwa'] I saw these reports circulated by a news agency. However, I will not make any comments because we only deal with information issued by the government, despite the fact that we do not rule out such information.

['Alam-al-Din] Some reports talk about weapons being smuggled from Iran to Bahrain. How accurate are these reports? If this is true, what are the quantities of weapons involved?

[Al-Mutawwa'] The terrorist plan that we uncovered yesterday showed that the objective was to topple the regime in Bahrain, mobilize and give military training to 3,000 people with a view to undermine the stability and security and establish a regime loyal to Iran. This was plan also involved importing weapons to Bahrain. However, what has reached us was not much. The Bahraini security organs managed to find the smuggled weapons in their hiding places and seized them. They will be exhibited along with some documents and confessions which confirm what we have announced previously.

['Alam-al-Din] You said that Bahrain's relations with Syria are good. Have you asked it to play any role?

[Al-Mutawwa'] Syria is a brotherly state with which we have very friendly and brotherly relations. Syria has never hesitated to support Bahrain and has always done its national duty toward its Arab brothers.

['Alam-al-Din] How do you view British press reports which talked about Imam al-Shirazi's support, from his residence in Qumm, for the disruptive elements in Bahrain and the Gulf states. Are these reports accurate?

[Al-Mutawwa'] We have seen these reports about al-Shirazi's role in the incidents in Bahrain, and are aware of disagreements between al-Shirazi and the Iranian Government. These reports could be explained as having been written both in and against Iran's interests. I do not want to discuss this issue. We are interested in remarks by one of Shaykh al-Shirazi's followers in London that he is against acts of violence and sabotage and hope that they are true. We welcome such positions.

['Alam-al-Din] How true are rumors about disagreements between Bahrain and some Western states on these states' positions toward dissidents?

[Al-Mutawwa'] The Western states are friendly states. We have very friendly relations with the United States. We are confident that it understands the measures that the state of Bahrain has undertaken to protect its security and its citizens' safety. Many U.S. officials have made statements to that effect. We hope that Britain, which is also a friendly state with which we share a long history and prosperous economic and trade relation, will understand the needs of our security and stability.

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Bahrain: Prime Minister's, Ministers' Speeches Reported

JN0506170996 (Internet) Al-Ayyam WWW in Arabic 5 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] His Highness Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Salman Al Khalifah, the prime minister, visited the Consultative Council at 1000 today to address the Council, which is meeting in an extraordinary session to discuss the government's statement on the security situation and its developments.

The prime minister was received upon arrival at the Council premises by Ibrahim Muhammad Hasan Humaydan, Consultative Council speaker; Faruq Yusuf al-Mu'ayyad, the first deputy speaker; and Muhammad Hasan Kamal-al-Din, second deputy speaker.

The session was attended by the ministers. The speaker of the Consultative Council made a speech, inaugurating the council's first extraordinary session. He then read the amir's decree calling the council to session. He then welcomed the prime minister. He said the presence of his highness the prime minister in this meeting today indices that the situation is extremely serious. Nothing can be more serious than a development which affects the country's security and safety. Therefore, we are all very anxious to listen to his highness the prime minister to explain matters to the council.

His Highness Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Salman Al Khalifah, the prime minister, then made a speech in which he said:

In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Brother speaker, brother Council members: With blessings from God Almighty, the government was able to unearth a criminal plot that aimed to harm the country's security and stability. The security agencies arrested a minority, which does not want to have the honor of belonging to this noble country and which was planning to topple the regime by force.

This minority chose to sell itself and betray the homeland. They messed around with people's lives and property, caused havoc, and let themselves be carried away by those who have no regard for responsibilities and who could not foresee the consequences.

Brothers: Therefore, it is not a question of riots and sabotage. It is a question of planning, conspiracy, and an attempt to encroach on our regime and independence and to spread sedition among the citizens of the same country. For this reason, his highness the amir called on your esteemed council to convene this extraordinary session to confront the danger together and to effect cohesion among all of us together for the sake of our nation, security, and stability, which is the most dear thing to us and which provides the best path we have chosen on the road to prosperity and progress.

Brothers: I was keen to attend this session personally to underline the gravity of the situation and to consult with you over the recent events after the security agencies apprehended the advocates of sedition and conspiracy and destroyed their illusions and dreams.

Brother speaker, I hope you would allow the interior minister to deliver his statement to the esteemed council. From God we seek success, he is the best of supporters. May God's peace and blessings be upon you.

The speaker of the council then asked the interior minister, Muhammad Bin-Khalifah Al Khalifah, to deliver his ministry's statement to the council. The interior minister delivered his statement saying: The presence of his highness the prime minister is an assertion of the government's full confidence in your esteemed council and the high regard in which it holds the council's views. With God's support and under the directives of our wise leadership, and through continued followup and surveillance operations, preventive measures and intensive efforts to safeguard the security of the homeland and the citizen and entrench stability, and thanks to the mature and positive cooperation of the noble citizens, the public security organs in the Interior Ministry have unearthed the so-called military wing of Hizballah-Bahrain. This organization is illegal and sought to undermine security and stability in Bahrain, and to overthrow the regime by force to establish an extremist regime loyal to the Islamic Republic of Iran. The security forces succeeded in exposing its organizational structure, bases, and wings, and all its contacts and foreign and domestic links, and arrested some of its founders, leaders, and members. So far, 44 defendants have been arrested, the confessions of 34 of whom were taken down in the presence of the investigating judge. The interrogation of the others continues. The absconding elements are being pursued and all suspect activities and moves abroad are being monitored. Extensive investigations and detailed confessions recorded in the presence of the investigating judge and confirmed by hard evidence have confirmed a number of facts and corroborated information on this sinful organization of which I would like to inform your esteemed council.

1. In 1993, the so-called military wing of Hizballah-Bahrain was established at instructions and by arrangement with the Iranian authorities and under the supervision and with the backing of the Iranian Revolution Guard Corps [IRGC] intelligence service to attain its illegal objectives which we have mentioned. This was achieved by enticing many Bahraini youths who were studying or residing in the Iranian city of Qom, as well

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as others who were in Bahrain and in other countries. They recruited them and made them undergo military training in Iran and in Hizballah's camps in Lebanon to form a military base to carry out their evil designs against our stable and secure country.

2. The Iranian authorities overtly and directly became involved as the IRGC intelligence service took it upon itself to support and back the so-called military wing of Hizballah-Bahrain, to follow up all of its activities, and to provide it with large sums of money, not to mention establishing it and forming its bases and wings and furnishing its principal headquarters in the city of Qom.

3. The IRGC intelligence service directly supervised the establishment of the organizational structure of what was called the military wing of Hizballah-Bahrain by giving it a military stamp to help achieve its destructive objectives by force. A military council was formed to assume running its activities through various subcommittees and offices.

4. The Iranian authorities, represented by the IRGC intelligence service, played an important role in the military training of the groups of Bahraini youths that the organization managed to recruit. The training operations began in April 1993, that is 18 months before the terrorist and sabotage operations began. This confirms that these incidents were prepared and planned in advance. At the beginning, the training took place in the IRGC camps. But, when the international community accused Iran of being behind the terrorist and sabotage operations witnessed by Bahrain, the Iranian authorities asked Hizballah in Lebanon to open its camps to the Bahraini youths who are sent by the organization under the supervision of the Iranian intelligence service. Groups of these youths were actually trained there. In both cases, the Iranian Foreign Ministry assumed the responsibility of facilitating their entry into Lebanese territories and arranging the smuggling of the trainees to the Hizballah camps in Lebanon.

The military training consisted of operations that help the organization attain its illegal objectives, particularly training on weapons, explosives, and the use of hand grenades in addition to training having to do with self-defense and how to collect information and evade surveillance and security measures, and secure secret documents and papers. At the behest and encouragement of the Iranian intelligence service officials, this evil organization carried out plans to smuggle weapons into Bahrain to be used for criminal operations. The security forces succeeded in confiscating various weapons since October 1995.

5. The investigation and the confessions recently revealed the comprehensive nature of the criminal scheme that has been targeting Bahrain's security and stability since the beginning of the sabotage and terrorist operations in late 1994. The security agencies have discovered contacts linking the Hizballah-Bahrain military wing and the political and media bases and wings at home and abroad, all of which work to undermine the country's law and order and harm people and property. The Interior Ministry will place all the facts and details on the terrorist organization represented by the military wing of Hizballah-Bahrain to the media so that the citizens and world public opinion will become aware of them and so that the world public opinion will learn the facts of the matter and eliminate all false reports and fabricated reports.

Afterward, the speaker of the Consultative Council declared the session adjourned. The prime minister then left the Council. He was given a warm farewell. Afterward, the Consultative Council held its extraordinary session under Speaker Ibrahim Humaydan. The Council members delivered speeches in which they expressed their condemnation and denunciation of the terrorist attempt to destabilize Bahrain. They stressed full support for the government's moves to ensure national stability and safeguard domestic security.

Kuwait

Kuwait: Authorities Impressed by Sea Skua Missile

MS0506122396 London FINANCIAL TIMES in English 5 Jun 96 p 6

[Report by Bernard Gray: "Bae Wins Kuwaiti Missile Contract"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] British Aerospace [BAe] has beaten Aerospatiale of France to an order for $100m of anti-ship missiles to equip Kuwait's new fast patrol craft. The order is a significant victory for the British defence company, since the Sea Skua missile will be fitted to a French-built ship for the first time and overturns expectations that Aerospatiale would win the order.

Sea Skua impressed the Kuwaiti authorities during the Gulf war by sinking Iraqi shipping after being fired from Royal Navy Lynx helicopters on patrol in the Gulf. Of 26 missiles fired, 19 scored hits and 15 ships were sunk.

A combination of combat-proven performance and price seems to have won the order for BAe. The contest was keenly fought between the two potential suppliers, with the prime ministers of both countries lobbying heavily for the contract.

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Sea Skua was originally developed as a helicopter-launched light anti-ship missile with a range of about 15km, and is in use in that role with six navies, including Britain's Royal Navy. BAe has invested in adapting the missile for launching from light patrol craft. These are not large enough to house traditional anti-ship missiles, such as the French Exocet or the U.S. Harpoon.

Now Sea Skua has broken into this surface-launch market, it may be in contention for other orders. Fast patrol craft are in use in a number of Gulf and Pacific Rim countries with expanding navies.

The order comes as confidence in the Gulf arms market is picking up. Following a rush of orders after the Gulf war there has been a lull. But improvements in the oil price and concerns about potential threats from Iran have renewed interest in weaponry.

BAe said last night it was confident it had won the order but that it had not yet received a contract.

Qatar

Qatar: Iranian Naval Ships Arrive for 'Friendly Visit'

LD0506153896 Tehran IRNA in English 1456 GMT 5 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, June 5, IRNA — For the first time since the victory of the Islamic revolution, two Iranian Navy ships arrived at the port of Doha in Qatar on the opposite rim of the Persian Gulf for a friendly visit.

The ships crews were welcomed at the port by Qatari Navy officials as well as the Iranian ambassador to the country.

The 4-day visit of the ships is aimed at strengthening fraternal ties between the two countries. Talks between the high-ranking Qatari and Iranian Navy officers are also scheduled.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia: Riyadh Denies Arab Summit To Be Held 7 Jun

LD0606072896 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 0325 GMT 6 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Riyadh, 6 Jun — An official source stated that holding a tripartite Arab summit in Saudi Arabia tomorrow, Friday, was not true.

The source was commenting on a report transmitted by the French news agency [AFP], quoting what the agency called a Saudi official source.

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Iraq: Saddam Sends Messages to Mubarak, Al-Asad on Summit

NC0606102696 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 31 May 96 p 1

[Report by Mahmud Bakri]

[FBIS Translated Text] Iraqi President Saddam Husayn has sent two important messages to President Husni Mubarak and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad. AL-SHA'B has learned that the two messages, which were conveyed through diplomatic channels in Jordan, expressed Iraqi President Saddam Husayn's deep desire to turn over a new leaf in Iraqi relations with Egypt and Syria. Political circles described Saddam Husayn's message to President Mubarak as extremely friendly. In his message, Saddam called for efforts to return Iraqi-Egyptian relations to their previous level and stressed Iraq's good intentions. Saddam's message to President al-Asad was in the same vein.

Information indicates that there is an Iraqi desire to hold a tripartite summit in Cairo with Presidents Mubarak, al-Asad, and Saddam. A number of senior Iraqi officials are holding contacts with officials in the foreign ministries in Cairo and Damascus to prepare the necessary atmosphere for holding this summit. This important development comes at a time when Cairo is intensifying its contacts to hold mini-summits to reach a minimum agreement among the Arab countries, after attempts to hold an expanded Arab summit have stumbled.

Trade relations between Cairo and Baghdad have recently been stimulated as Egyptian and Iraqi economic delegations exchanged visits to Cairo and Baghdad, which reflects the tangible development in Egyptian-Iraqi relations. This development generated statements by a number of senior Iraqi officials who praised Egypt's stance on maintaining Iraqi unity against attempts to partition it and demands that the unjust blockade imposed on the Iraqi people since 1990 be lifted.

Iraq: OPEC Discussing Iraq's Return to Oil Market

MS0506130096 London FINANCIAL TIMES in English 5 Jun 96 p 3

[Report by Robert Corzine: "Oil States Prepare To Draw Iraq Back Into OPEC Fold"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Members of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries will begin deliberations in Vienna today on ways of bringing Iraq back into world oil markets without undermining prices.

A number of delegates who arrived in the Austrian capital yesterday were generally positive about the prospect of awarding Iraq a quota to accommodate exports that will be allowed under an oil-for-food plan agreed with the United Nations last month. The agreement allows Iraq to sell $2bn of oil over six months. That could result in 700,000 to 900,000 or so barrels a day of Iraqi crude reaching world markets within a few months.

The positive signals even came from officials of recent Iraqi enemies such as Iran and Kuwait. One Iranian delegate said it was time the suffering of the Iraqi people be relieved.

But the question being asked by many delegates yesterday was whether Iraq could be accommodated at a time of rising over-production from Opec states such as Venezuela. "If you have over-production everything else is meaningless," said an Iranian official. A "meaningful" outcome from the meeting would need to include agreement on Iraq, a solution to large-scale quota cheating and a deal to apportion growth in oil demand among member states, he said.

In recent days some delegates have suggested that the issue of cheating could be largely overcome by rising worldwide demand for oil. There have even been suggestions, for example, that demand may prove strong enough not only to accommodate Iraq's partial return to the market, but also to allow an increase in Opec's production ceiling of 24.52 million barrels a day set in September 1993.

Some demand forecasts put the sustained call on Opec as high as 26 million barrels a day. "The market is absorbing almost every barrel produced without any major stock build in the main consuming countries," said a Gulf Arab official this week. Iran yesterday said it, too, saw rising demand for Opec oil, although Tehran officials suggested that it would average perhaps 25 million barrels day this year.

But other delegates were less certain. "To meet a price target of $16 to $17 a barrel for the benchmark Brent crude over the next year you simply have to cut back hard on over-production," according to a delegate from one of the larger Gulf producers. He said oil prices could weaken sharply if 700,000 barrels a day of Iraqi crude was added to the market which is already absorbing up to 1.5 million barrels a day in current Opec over-production.

There also appears to be uncertainty among the group over the output potential of non-Opec producers, such as the UK and Norway. Some delegates scoff at suggestions that such countries can continue to expand capacity as rapidly as in recent years. They also wonder about the validity of forecasts which show another sharp rise in non-Opec output later this year.

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"Where is it supposed to be coming from?" asked one delegate. "The North Sea? It's not there. From where else? Brazil, Mexico, China? It's just not there."

The issue of Venezuelan over-production is a top priority for some countries. But it is not clear how hard Saudi Arabia, Opec's largest producer, is willing to push the issue. There has been talk among some delegations of trying to avoid a confrontation with Venezuela. "We want to avoid a conflict about quotas," said one delegate. But others appear more determined that Venezuela be forced to concede publicly that it is "cheating on its quota," something which is so far resolutely denied.

Iraq: 3 MiG-23 Planes Reportedly Destroyed at al-Rashid Base

JN0406175296 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1215 GMT 4 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Our sources confirmed that three planes completely melted in their hangars at the al-Rashid Air Base. The sources added during the hours of darkness a white powder was poured over three MiG-23 planes at their fortified hangars at the al-Rashid Air Base in southern Baghdad. The powder caused the planes to melt, turning them into a mass of iron and aluminum.

Our sources indicated that a large number of fighter planes and helicopters were destroyed at many bases and air strips over the past three months. They added that eight helicopters had been destroyed at the al-Mansuriyah Base in the Diyala Governorate. Moreover, 11 planes, including seven MiG-23 planes, were destroyed by explosives at the Tikrit Base in late May.

Iraq: Opposition Reports Attempt To Kill al-Nasiriyah Official

JN0506201196 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1215 GMT 5 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Iraqi opposition sources said that criminal Salah 'Abbud [word indistinct], the military ruler of [words indistinct].

The newspaper AL-SHAHADAH, which speaks for the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, said that an Islamic resistance group attacked the convoy of criminal Salah 'Abbud [the military ruler of al-Nasiriyah] on a street in the city of al-Nasiriyah while he was heading for the headquarters of the authority's party in the governorate.

The paper asserted that a quick clash occurred between the attackers and the escorts of the military ruler. Salah 'Abbud was wounded in the leg, and two of his escorts were killed. One of the three vehicles comprising the convoy sustained heavy damaged.

The center of the al-Nasiriyah Governorate has witnessed continued jihad operations for more than three months, killing many key figures and henchmen of the regime and destroying a number of security, military, and border headquarters and offices.

Iraq: Minister Denies State To Stop Grain Purchases

JN0606075896 Baghdad Iraq Television Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 4 Jun 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Minister of Trade Dr. Muhammad Mahdi Salih asserted that the state will continue to support agricultural production and pursue the rewarding (?pricing) policy announced upon instructions from leader President Saddam Husayn.

When asked by Iraq Radio about reports that his ministry will cease to purchase wheat and barley from farmers after 15 June, the minister said: These reports are utterly baseless. We will not do so either now or in the future. He added that peasants in each and every governorate have until two weeks after the end of the harvest season to deliver their crops to the Ministry of Trade silos.

The minister went on to say that his ministry is committed to buying grain crops from farmers, including farmers in the Governorates of Dahuk, al-Sulaymaniyah, and Irbil, to whom the silos of the Governorates of al-Ta'mim and Ninawah have been opened. They can sell their produce to marketing centers.

The minister said that Decree No. 40 of 95 will apply to farmers who fail to deliver their entire produce after the end of the harvest season in each governorate.

Iraq: Farmers Urged To Plant Rice

JN0506084096 Baghdad Iraq Television Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 3 Jun 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Ministry of Agriculture announced that the appropriate parties will purchase the 1996 rice harvest at good prices. The ministry said farmers will have the option to sell the harvest to the state's delivery centers or to sell them directly in the local markets.

The ministry urged farmers to continue to plant and maintain this crop during the current planting season, in order to achieve the highest possible yield, and to increase their efforts to provide food for our steadfast people.

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Israel: Netanyahu Disagrees With 'Arafat, Welcomes al-'Aqabah Talks

TA0506170096 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 5 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister-elect Binyamin Netanyahu has reacted to remarks made by Yasir 'Arafat in al-'Aqabah, that the day in which he will announce the establishment of an independent Palestinian state is drawing near. Netanyahu said this is not the first time such a statement has been made. He, however, holds a different view of the permanent arrangement with the Palestinians, and his position against the establishment of a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as capital is well known.

Our correspondent Gil Litman reports that Netanyahu welcomed the remarks made at the al-'Aqabah summit about promoting the peace process.

Prime Minister-elect Binyamin Netanyahu keeps receiving phone calls from heads of state congratulating him on his election. This afternoon, he received a call from Omani Foreign Minister Yusuf Bin-'Alawi, in which the two discussed tightening the relations between the two countries.

Netanyahu also held a conversation with Egyptian Ambassador Muhammad Basyuni, and received a letter from Egyptian President Mubarak. The two discussed a possible meeting between Netanyahu and Mubarak soon, after the new cabinet is set up.

Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz adds that Dr. Dore Gold, Netanyahu's political adviser, held a conversation with the foreign minister of Mauritania.

Israel: Netanyahu Calls Omani Foreign Minister on Improving Ties

TA0506152296 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1400 GMT 5 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prime Minister-elect Binyamin Netanyahu this afternoon phoned Foreign Minister of Oman Yusuf Bin-'Alawi. Netanyahu's spokesman said the prime minister-elect repeated his commitment to continue with the diplomatic process and stressed the importance of deepening relations between Israel and Oman.

The Omani foreign minister said to have spoken as well of the importance of developing relations between Israel and the Gulf states.

Israel: Netanyahu, Sharansky on Need for 'Closer Ties' to CIS

TA0506152096 Tel Aviv VESTI in Russian 4 Jun 96 p 2

[FBIS Translated Text] VESTI has learned that in the course of their meeting yesterday, Binyamin Netanyahu and Yisra'el Ba'aliya leader Natan Sharansky discussed bilateral ties with Russia. Natan Sharansky observed that the series of errors Israel has made in this sphere must be rectified. Netanyahu replied that he intends to take various steps to improve the cooperation with all CIS members, and most notably with Russia. In addition to a number of obvious benefits Israel may derive from closer ties, he said, we must not forget that these states are a most vital reservoir of aliya. Netanyahu noted, at the same time, that the best way to attract new citizens is by developing the economy of Israel.

Israel: IDF Considers Lebanon Incident Violation of Understandings

TA0606083496 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 6 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The terrorists carried out a series of attacks on IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and SLA [South Lebanese Army] forces in south Lebanon's security zone this morning. There were no injuries. Our correspondent Ilan Ro'e reports that the terrorists initially detonated a roadside bomb against an IDF patrol in the eastern sector. There were no injuries and no damage was caused. Later, shots were directed at an SLA position from the village of Bra'shit in the western sector. The IDF considers this incident a violation of the agreement of understandings, but decided not to return fire at Bra'shit. Sporadic gunfire was also directed at several IDF and SLA positions in the security zone this morning. To repeat, there were no injuries and no damage was caused in any of these incidents.

Israel: High Court Rejects Appeal on Premiership Reelection

TA0506122296 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 5 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The High Court of Justice has unanimously rejected the appeals demanding that the blank slips cast in the premiership elections be counted.

Our correspondent Mikha'el Tuchfeld reports the judges stated that the election law stipulates that a blank slip conflicts with the law and should be disqualified. The judges emphasized that this interpretation agrees with the situation that has characterized Israeli elections for many years. It also agrees with the understanding of

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Central Elections Committees past and present, and with the rules of the game set before the elections.

Israel: Unofficial Likud-Labor Unity Government Contacts Continue

TA0606042696 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0400 GMT 6 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Likud and Labor officials are continuing to hold secret contacts to examine the possibility of establishing a national unity government. Our correspondent Yaron Deqel has learned these talks are being held with the knowledge of Shim'on Peres and Binyamin Netanyahu. Sources in the two big parties assess, however, that Peres and Netanyahu have still not formed an opinion regarding the issue of a national unity government, adding that only after a decision is made will it be possible to launch real negotiations.

Israel: Netanyahu Urged To Appoint Sharon Defense Minister

TA0606102396 (Internet) Judean Voice in English 5 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Arik Sharon won't settle for anything less than the Defense Ministry or the Ministry of Finance if Bibi Netanyahu wants him to join his cabinet, according to Sharon's friends. The media continues to claim that there is tension between the newly elected prime minister and Arik Sharon. Judean Voice Commentary:

Binyamin Netanyahu cannot ignore Sharon's military credentials. Every military academy in the world studies General Sharon's military tactics. If Netanyahu does not appoint Sharon Defense Minister, that will be a clear cut case of fear of the gentiles and their response at the expense of Israel's best security interests.

Israel: Arab MK Views Elections, Likud, Peace Process

NC0606075696 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0510 GMT 6 Jun 96

[Telephone interview with 'Abd-al-Wahhab al-Darawishah, Israeli MK and leader of the Arab Democratic Party, in Nazareth, by Sayyid al-Miliji in Cairo; date not given; from the "Dialogue From Afar" program—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [al-Miliji] During the election campaign, Netanyahu focused on the concept of security. He then said that the Oslo agreements were a fait accompli. He also said that he would not meet with President Yasir 'Arafat, later he said that he might meet him. In light of his changing positions, do you expect him to change Likud views on settlement with the Arabs?

[Al-Darawishah] Since the announcement of Netanyahu's election as prime minister, I noticed that he has been trying to break free of the extremist character he assumed during the electoral campaign, as well as from his past few years as a representative of the right wing and leader of the Likud, which believes in the greater Israeli nation and insists on refusing to give up any Arab lands. He is trying to get rid of that extremist and antipeace character. He is trying to market himself to the world at large and before Israeli public opinion as a man who seeks peace and is willing to keep up the peace march. He is trying to display a commodity that the world needs. However, he has not revealed the features of the commodity he is marketing. He has not revealed his position on the issues of withdrawal from Hebron, the final solution, or withdrawal from the Golan Heights. He is talking about peace. But so far, he has not provided evidence that he is seeking a true peace. He talks about a secure peace, one that agrees with the Likud vision; a peace that keeps up the settlement policy and continues the occupation. Hence, I believe that Netanyahu needs to prove that words about peace need actual deeds so that we can believe them.

For my part, I question many of these new statements, although I welcome any peace-preaching statement. We want to go deeper into matters and examine them in reality. So far, Netanyahu has not given any signs that he is peace-inclined.

[Al-Miliji] Press reports indicate that Netanyahu will form a coalition of Likud and rightist and religious parties. What is the latest developments in this matter?

[Al-Darawishah] There are contacts with the Labor Party to form a national unity government. Personally, I believe that this is very dangerous. If he forms a national unity government with the Labor Party, this means that there was no opposition and that the Labor Party has lost its individualism and become another Likud, instead of being an alternative for the right wing coalition.

However, Netanyahu might be using these contacts with the Labor Party to put pressure on the religious rightist parties.

[Al-Miliji] As Arabs or Palestinians in Israel, you won 9 seats in the Knesset. What is your situation at present?

[Al-Darawishah] There are nine seats for nationalist Arab powers: Four from the standard Arab list and five from the front and the grouping [not further explained], including a Jewish Knesset Member [MK]. This means four Arabs from the standard list and four Arabs from

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the front and the grouping. There are also three Arab MK from the Labor Party and Meretz. There is a total of 11 Arab MK, almost one-tenth of the Knesset. This is an important parliamentary power nobody can ignore. Our national voice will rise high in defense of our Palestinian people and the rights of the Arab nation. We will demand the right to live freely and in dignity and pride and we will demand equality in the state of Israel. We will obstruct the continuation of any racist policy against us. In the meantime, we will carry weight and will have our significance in the political arena.

[Al-Miliji] You had an understanding with the Labor Party. But now Likud is in power.

[Al-Darawishah] We knew Likud in the past as well. If Likud takes power, this does not mean the end of the world. I advise no one to panic as though everything had collapsed with Likud's rise to power. I believe that Likud as well can be subjected to world, Arab, and local pressure to curb the toughness of its positions on the Palestinian people, the Arab nation, and the peace march. There were fears and doubts at the beginning, but we controlled ourselves. We are aware that we are capable of putting pressure on a rightwing government to prevent it from keeping up a racist policy hostile to us and to the Arab nation. I advise the Arab nation not to panic. They have to act firmly and in a true nationalist spirit, because the right wing and Likud in Israel fear the Arab nation when it is united, confident, and has faith in its cause. This is what we are trying to do.

Israel: Security Forces Kill Palestinians in East Jerusalem, Gaza

TA0606045696 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0400 GMT 6 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A resident of the Ra's al-'Amud neighborhood was killed early this morning and another resident suffered moderate wounds from shots fired by border policemen. Our police affairs correspondent Aviv Bushinsky reports that a Border Police force encountered three suspicious Arabs. One of the policemen suspected that one of the three was attempting to draw a handgun. The policemen opened fire and killed the suspect. The two other Arabs tried to escape and one of them was shot and wounded. The third suspect was also caught. It later transpired that the man killed did not possess a weapon.

In the southern Gaza Strip, a Palestinian was killed by IDF [Israel Defense Forces] gunfire. The man was running toward a position of Israeli soldiers who called on him to stop. When he did not, the soldiers fired.

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Jordan: Sources Expect King Husayn-al-Asad Reconciliation in Cairo

TA0506152796 Gaza AL-HAYAH AL-JADIDAH in Arabic 4 Jun 96 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman, AL-HAYAH AL-JADIDAH — Jordanian political sources expect a reconciliation meeting between Jordan's King Husayn and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad.

The sources said that this meeting is expected to take place in Cairo in the middle of July under the auspices and with the participation of President Husni Mubarak. The sources added that Cairo is also trying to arrange a ministerial level meeting of the cordon states: Palestine, Jordan, Egypt, Syria, and Lebanon. The date of this meeting, which Egypt is seeking to convene in Cairo, has not been determined yet. The sources said that this issue will be discussed at the Palestinian-Jordanian-Egyptian summit in al-'Aqabah on Wednesday [5 June].

Jordan: Editorial—Summit Sent Clear Message to Israel's Netanyahu

JN0606103896 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 6 Jun 96 pp 1, 20

[Editorial: "Al-'Aqabah Summit's Message"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The al-'Aqabah summit among the leaders of the Arab peace camp is exceptionally important. The final statement issued by the summit and the news conference held by the three leaders — Husayn, Mubarak, and 'Arafat — sent a clear message to the Israeli prime minister-elect.

The final statement stressed the need to promote efforts to continue the peace process and ensure commitment to the implementation of all agreements signed within its framework, regardless of the changes on the Israeli political scene. These agreements were signed with the Israeli Government, and not with any particular party.

Perhaps it was clear that the al-'Aqabah meeting was primarily devoted to supporting the Palestinian side in the final-status negotiations. These negotiations will address important issues that concern all Arabs, including Jerusalem, which occupies a special place in the hearts of millions of Arabs and Muslims.

At the al-'Aqabah summit, the three leaders continued their discussion of issues that they raised less than a month ago in Cairo. These issues include ways to support the Palestinian brothers in the final status negotiations to enable them to reach an agreement that guarantees their national legitimate rights on their national soil and that asserts legal, historical, and spiritual Palestinian, Arab, Islamic, and Christian rights in Arab Jerusalem.

The summit's message was very clear. The summit addressed the next Israeli Government objectively and quietly. This government has yet to be formed and to draw up a platform. We hope that the Israeli prime minister-elect will understand the message very well and show a positive response to the summit's statement that did not contain any preconceived accusations.

Jordan: Summit Praised for Laying 'Groundwork' for Arab Unity

JN0606090096 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 6-7 Jun 96 p 6

[Editorial: "First Summit Goes Well"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The principal message coming out of yesterday's al-'Aqabah summit grouping His Majesty King Husayn, President Husni Mubarak and Palestinian leader Yasir 'Arafat was the decision to adopt a "wait and see" posture in the wake of the election in Israel of the Likud leader Binyamin Netanyahu as prime minister. There was a consensus among the three leaders that the Arab side should not pass premature judgments on the upcoming Likud-led government. There was also unanimity that the peace process has developed a momentum of its own—to the extent that it has become irreversible. The entire international community, especially the major powers, it was noted, has too much vested interest in the success of the process to let it slip.

President Mubarak was hard-pressed to explain why Egypt was participating in two separate Arab summits, the one in al-'Aqabah and the other in Riyadh on Friday [7 June] which will also include Syria, rather than trying to bring all parties together under one roof. But he was candid in admitting that larger gatherings were not possible for now, and certainly not an all encompassing summit. What Egypt might be expected to do next is to prepare the ground for a meeting where at least the participants in the al-'Aqabah and Riyadh summits get together—prior to and before a full Arab summit can be called. This, we think, is very important not only because of the Likud's rise to power in Israel but also because there are no fundamental differences among the parties concerned.

King Husayn alluded to this yesterday when he made a notably conciliatory gesture towards President Hafiz al-Asad by emphasising that their personal relationship remained good despite the estrangement in political ties.

In any case, and judging by the communique that was issued yesterday, the future of the Palestinian track took centre stage in the deliberations of the three Arab leaders. The King and President Mubarak obviously

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wanted most of all to allay Palestinian fears about the results of the Israeli elections and to reassure President 'Arafat that they will not abandon his people in their determination to have all accords with Israel honoured, likewise, His Majesty made it a point to reassure Mr. 'Arafat that Jordan was not now, nor will it ever be, interested in speaking for the Palestinians, regardless of who was in power in Israel.

Jordan, the Monarch said, supports wholeheartedly and unequivocally the Palestinian struggle for independence and statehood on their national soil. And if it was impossible to achieve statehood, it would even be more impossible for Jordan to claim representation of the Palestinian people and their cause.

With this in mind, we feel the Arab reaction to Netanyahu's election will be more solid and meaningful. We just hope that the Riyadh summit would reinforce the groundwork laid at al-'Aqabah, crystallising in the process a united Arab stand in the face of the challenge that lies ahead.

Jordan: Al-'Aqabah Meeting Viewed as Precursor to Pan-Arab Summit

JN0606101396 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 6 Jun 96 p 23

[Editorial: "The Success of al-'Aqabah Summit and the Stands of Some Brothers"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The results of the tripartite summit in al-'Aqabah yesterday stressed the need for and the importance of continuing the consultations and coordination among Arab leaders in order to create the necessary atmospheres to restore Arab solidarity. Such solidarity can help confront the challenges and deal with the political developments in a manner that guarantees Arab rights and ensures that the peace process arrives at its desired goals.

Yesterday's summit provided an opportunity for Jordan to reaffirm its position toward the Palestinian brothers. This position is based on full support and backing and not on interference in their affairs or efforts to achieve any designs or gains. This is especially the case since some people started to talk about a change in policy. These reports coincided with the election of Netanyahu as Israel's prime minister. The Jordanian position is based on firm principles and a strategic view of the region's future. It is not influenced by policies that change daily, and it hardens and supports the position of the Palestinian negotiator as he prepares to enter into the final-phase negotiations to arrive at a solution on the Palestinian track.

The al-'Aqabah summit cannot be viewed as a mere meeting among the three leaders. It should be viewed as a meeting that set a firm ground to restore solidarity and unite Arab ranks. It should also be viewed as the beginning, hopefully a good one, of an effort that will produce a comprehensive meeting at which the Arab leaders can establish a common front to face the future and arrive at a level, even the minimum level, of agreement on the objective and the means to arrive at it.

If the success of the al-'Aqabah summit is now certain, we look forward to tomorrow's summit in Jeddah. We hope that this summit will also succeed and that it will crown what was achieved in al-'Aqabah yesterday. We hope that agreement and harmony will characterize the two summits, because there is clearly a dire need for such meetings to integrate and to conclude with a comprehensive Arab summit, the importance of which is understood by everyone.

Based on Jordan's well-known positions and historic Arab role, we must stress that the optimistic atmosphere must coincide with sincere Arab positions that are removed outbidding and casting doubts on others and removed from the accusations by some Arab officials against Jordan and its role and history. The others' ability to direct accusations and cast doubts will be countered with facts and frank and clear positions.

It is time for some of our brothers to understand that the ties of brotherhood and our concern for these ties, and even our concern for their interests, does not mean weakness. Their failure, and the continuation and accumulation of this failure, does not mean that it should be exported to others.

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Lebanon: Al-Hirawi Receives Clinton Message on Peace Developments

NC0506112296 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1030 GMT 5 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President Ilyas al-Hirawi today received a message from U.S. President Bill Clinton dealing with developments in the peace process. The message underlined the U.S. Administration's endeavors to continue this process in the region.

U.S. Ambassador Richard Jones, who delivered the message to the president this afternoon in the presence of U.S. Charge d'Affaires Ron Schleicher, said after the meeting that the message dealt with the future concept of the peace process.

Regarding the next stage, Jones said: We are at a stage where the Israelis are forming their government and, as prime minister, Netanyahu has several alliance options and there are several people he has to talk to. I believe that this process will take some time. From his speech, I believe that Netanyahu is committed to the peace process. The U.S. Administration will do what it can to activate the peace process, but we must wait for the formation of the Israeli Government before the contacts are resumed and this should be done after the government is formed.

Lebanon: Al-Hirawi Briefs Cabinet on Talks With Syria's al-Asad

NC0506184196 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1800 GMT 5 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] At the outset of a cabinet session held at B'abda palace this evening, President Ilyas al-Hirawi briefed ministers on the outcome of the Lebanese-Syrian summit that was held in Latakia on Sunday [2 June] with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad. The summit focused on Arab and world issues and bilateral ties.

The president said they assessed the latest developments in the region in light of the Israeli elections and these developments' possible impact on the region's peace process.

The Council of Ministers emphasized Lebanon's firm stance demanding a just and comprehensive peace in accordance with the Madrid conference principles and the implementation of UN Resolution 425. Lebanon considers this resolution as a basis for achieving peace.

Lebanon: Al-Harari—Israeli Withdrawal Key to Peace

MS0606104596 London INDEPENDENT in English 6 Jun 96 p 15

[Report on interview with Lebanese Prime Minister Fariq al-Harari by Robert Fisk in Beirut; date not given: "Simple Peace Equation That Doesn't Add Up"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sitting on the lawn of Rafiq al-Hariri's Beirut mansion, it all sounded so simple. If Bibi Netanyahu orders Israeli occupation soldiers out of southern Lebanon, the Hizballah can be disarmed. "If Mr Netanyahu wants to change his image and the impression he gave during the election campaign, he will withdraw from Lebanon with no conditions" the Lebanese Prime Minister said, the equation so mathematical as it floated over the perfectly cut lawn. "Then Lebanon will be able to assure security in the south."

If only it was that easy. What the apparently moderate Shim'on Peres couldn't do, the right-wing Mr Netanyahu might do. Was this not the Begin syndrome again, the idea that the more hawkish the Israelis, the easier they will find it to make concessions to the Arabs?

But Mr al-Hariri is shrewder than that and, sitting in his garden chair, the hammering of reconstruction banging away behind the trees in west Beirut he seemed to have few illusions.

"From our side, we don't differentiate between Peres and Netanyahu — and you shouldn't forget that a few weeks ago, it was Peres who was bombing civilians in Lebanon... I didn't believe at all that Peres would win. I told everyone who asked me that it was 50/50." Like most Middle East leaders, Mr al-Hariri watched the election on television and he watched the Peres performance closely. "The way he was acting during the election campaign made me think it would be very difficult for him to win. It may be the war in Lebanon played a role. He looked like he was inconsistent in his ideas on peace. He talked about peace and he made war. He killed civilians and he went to Paris and talked about tolerance. I think many Israelis were confused. They heard Peres talking about peace and watched him make war. On the other hand, they saw another man who was young and new... I saw on TV many normal Israeli people are afraid of the future, afraid of how Israel will be governed and the future of the peace process. I saw young and middle-aged people talking about uncertainty."

Doubt is not something Mr al-Hariri is prepared to contemplate about Lebanon, a sentiment which may not be shared by all the Lebanese. While living in the

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nearest to a Western style democracy that exists in the Arab world, the Lebanese know that their government must never contradict Syria and that Syria's favourites sit in cabinet with Mr al-Hariri. They fear that Israel may soon strike again at Lebanon and that Syria's 22,000 troops in the country will no more be able to protect them next time than they could in April. But the billionaire Prime Minister, whose personal investment in Lebanon's post-civil war reconstruction includes a 10-per-cent shareholding in the company rebuilding Beirut's city centre, believes Lebanon has been innoculated against Israeli bombardments.

"The last aggression showed that Lebanon is immune enough to function normally after 16 days of bombardment... We are a peaceful country. We are not trying to be militarily strong like Israel. We are trying to rebuild to develop our country, to build schools and hospitals."

Nations can rebuild even when they are partly occupied, Mr al-Hariri said. "Part of Syria has been occupied since 1967 and they have a development programme. Jordan and Egypt had part of their countries occupied for many years. But that doesn't mean life stopped. Germany was divided until a few years ago and from the point of view of the west Germans, a big part of it was occupied. But they still continued developing their country."

But then, what has happened to the 27 April ceasefire? Had not four Israeli soldiers been killed since the election? Had not the Israelis bombed a Hizballah base near Ba'lbek?

"The attack by the resistance (sic) against Israeli soldiers in the occupied territory is not a violation of the April understanding. But what the Israeli armed forces did in Ba'lbek... was a violation — they chose a target very far from the battlefield."

The Americans have argued that if Hizballah were disarmed, Israel would leave Lebanon alone. Mr al-Hariri sits forward with impatience. "Are they going to leave Lebanon? Why are they occupying part of our country in the first place? I don't know why. Maybe they want to use this occupation in the peace negotiations... It all depends on Israel. If Mr Netanyahu decides to withdraw from Lebanon and Syria, the peace can take place at any time."

But Mr Netanyahu has stated he will not withdraw from the Golan Heights. "So it means he doesn't want peace," Mr al-Hariri responds bleakly. "No peace will take place without a complete Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights."

So what of President Bill Clinton who failed to condemn the civilian slaughter in Lebanon last April, who supported Israel's claim that the bloodbath was provoked by Hizballah? Mr al-Hariri chooses his words carefully. "The United States is an essential part of the peace process... we would like to see the U.S. play the role of an honest broker. If it does this, peace can be achieved." He concluded: "He should have condemned the massacre at Qana, because nobody can justify the massacre of innocents."

Lebanon: Buwayz on Arab Solidarity, Netanyahu Policy

NC0606062396 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0430 GMT 6 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz, in a dialogue with editors doyen leader Milhim Karam, called for removing the effects of the Gulf War, which fragmented Arab ranks. He also called for drawing up a unified Arab strategy to cope with the forthcoming stage. He noted that the pressures we are facing portend a difficult stage, replete with challenges. He stressed that an Arab economic defense line in the Gulf will not be able to survive if Israel succeeds in breaking the political and security defense line in Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, Jordan, and Palestine.

Buwayz stated that three factors will determine the new Israeli policy: Israeli Prime Minister-elect Binyamin Netanyahu's turning from a candidate into a responsible official, the type of alliances he will hold to form his cabinet, and Washington's role. He expects that Israeli policy will take shape after about two months. He noted that Netanyahu's visit to Washington will play a role in the Middle East. He said that it is not normal that the future of a region as important as the Middle East should be contingent upon the election choices of Israel. [passage omitted]

Lebanon: Hizballah To 'Watch' Government's Protection of People

NC0506162196 Beirut AL-'AHD in Arabic 24 May 96 p 1

[Editorial: "The Logic of Force"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Zionist entity violated the April Understanding when its forces bombarded civilian targets and wounded a woman. The Zionist forces continue to harass fishermen on the high seas, preventing them from fishing. Even fields and farms have not been spared the Zionist shelling, which caused damage to property and crops.

This is not surprising. This Zionist behavior was rather expected, because the Zionist entity has never respected international documents, understandings, or resolutions thanks to the United States, which has justified the

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grotesque massacres of Qana carried out by the government of Shim'on Peres for election purposes, which can only be done at the expense of the blood and livelihood of the Lebanese.

The United States is not content with all this. The United States is delaying the formation of the supervision committee that is to be charged with investigating the violations; this is to give Peres room to act against Lebanese civilians and present it to the Zionist public as a victory following the charges leveled by the Zionist opposition that Peres' failure in Lebanon has further restricted the Zionist army's actions against the resistance.

Hizballah has reiterated that the protection of the civilians, which has been the responsibility of the resistance for years, has now become the responsibility of everyone, particularly the Lebanese state, the signatory of the Understanding. Hizballah will watch closely what the state does in this regard so that the Lebanese people are not exposed to aggression now that the Islamic Resistance policy has succeeded in imposing equal terror. This was reiterated by Secretary General Hasan Nasrallah when he said that any time given to the enemy for retaliation will also be given to the resistance. Nevertheless, the secretary general has often noted that we are committed to the spirit and contents of the understanding, but the Zionist enemy cannot abide by it.

In light of the repeated Zionist violations, it has become evident that this enemy does not understand the logic of understandings and agreements. This enemy understands only one thing, namely the logic of force and retaliation. This had deterred this enemy for many years and forced it to apologize after targeting civilians because it is afraid of the resistance's retaliation. For the resistance knows how to inflict harm on the occupation army and force it to pay a heavy price for its crimes against civilians.

Lebanon: Hizballah, Shiite Leaders Discuss Israeli Elections

NC0606064396 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0430 GMT 6 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Higher Islamic Shiite Council Chairman Shaykh Muhammad Mahdi Shams-al-Din held a meeting at his headquarters yesterday with a delegation from the Hizballah leadership, including Hizballah Secretary General Hasan Nasrallah, his deputy Shaykh Na'im Qasim, and deputy Ibrahim Amin al-Sayyid, head of the Loyalty to the Resistance Bloc in the Chamber of Deputies.

Also attending the meeting was Mufti shaykh 'Abd-al-Amir Qabalan, deputy chairman of the Higher Islamic Shiite Council. During the meeting, the conferees reviewed current local and regional developments, particularly developments arising from the recent elections in Israel.

Lebanon: Fadlallah Dismisses Bahrain's Charges Against Iran

NC0506141896 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 1330 GMT 5 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In his weekly Koran-interpreting lesson, His Eminence 'Allamah Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah said Bahrain's recent charges against Iran that it is working to overthrow the regime in Manama are the work of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency. 'Allamah Fadlallah said Iran has no interest in carrying out any action complicating its ties with the Gulf. He disclosed that Iran itself has prevented harmful acts against Bahrain.

Commenting on the Israeli elections' outcome, 'Allamah Fadlallah said the Israeli elections are bound to influence the general political situation in the region. He described Israel as a base of global arrogance to confuse and preoccupy the region, as 'Allamah Fadlallah put it.

Lebanon: Israeli Artillery Retaliates After Roadside Bomb Explosion

NC0506162696 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1552 GMT 5 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli artillery positioned in al-Zaffatah is shelling the environs of Habbush, Kafr Rumman, and 'Arab Salim, setting agricultural fields ablaze.

According to security sources, the resistance detonated a bomb against a Lahd [South Lebanese Army] patrol on the al-Jarmaq-al-'Ayshiyah road at 1800 [1500 GMT].

Lebanon: 'Islamic Resistance' Retaliates for Israeli Shelling

NC0506194196 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1900 GMT 5 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli acts of aggression against peaceful villages and towns have continued. The enemy artillery emplacement in al-Zaffatah bombarded the al-Litani River basin, the outskirts of Kafr Rumman, and the woods of 'Arab Salim, causing fires in crop fields.

In retaliation this evening, the Islamic Resistance detonated an explosive charge under an agent Lahd militia [South Lebanese Army] foot patrol on the al-Jarmaq-al-'Ayshiyah Road.

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Lebanon: Resistance Detonates Charge Near Israeli Patrol

NC0606064496 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0600 GMT 6 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] According to THE NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY correspondent in Tulin, a resistance group at 0755 [0455 GMT] today detonated an explosive device while a hostile patrol was travelling along the southern approach to al-'Udaysah. After the blast, the resistance fighters fired a number of anti-armor missiles at the hostile patrol. The attack took place only 2 kms from the Israeli settlement of Misgav'am. The Israeli enemy has been bombarding the al-Saluqi valley, al-Tayyibah triangle, and the hills adjacent to al-'Udaysah since 0830 today. Shells have also landed north of Qabrikha.

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Syria: Al-Asad Invites Fahd, Mubarak to Damascus Summit 7 Jun

JN0606100496 Damascus SSC Television in Arabic 0935 GMT 6 Jun 96

[Unscheduled announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: President Hafiz al-Asad addressed an invitation to the custodian of the two holy mosques, King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud of Saudi Arabia and President Muhammad Husni Mubarak of Egypt to hold a tripartite summit in Damascus tomorrow, 7 June.

This summit is expected to discuss the recommendations and proposals presented by the foreign ministers of the three countries to the leaders of their countries on the Arab situation and the fate of the peace process in light of the developments in the region.

Syria: Al-Asad Reportedly Says Jordan, PLO Should Admit 'Mistake'

JN0506185396 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1100 GMT 5 Jun 96

[Report by Randah Habib in al-'Aqabah, Jordan]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] We have learned from an authoritative Jordanian source that Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad expressed readiness to attend a five-way summit with the leaders of Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, and the Palestinians, on condition that Jordan and the Palestinians admit that they made a mistake when they signed separate agreements with Israel.

Syria: 'Responsible' Sources React to U.S. Reports on Explosions

JN0506164796 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1100 GMT 5 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Several explosions occurred in various places in Syria last month, prompting the U.S. Embassy in Damascus to issue a statement on 2 June calling on U.S. citizens to be alert.

U.S. State Department spokesman Glyn Davies, who reported this, denied knowledge of where the explosions took place but said that they were not associated with threats and that he does not believe they were directed against U.S. citizens and interests.

In any case, the Syrian sources expressed extreme surprise at these reports, coming as they do from Washington. More in the following report by Thana' al-Imam in Damascus:

Syrian political circles today received the U.S. State Department report with disregard and consternation at its timing. According to these circles, the aim of disseminating these reports at this time is to divert attention from the Israeli attempts to form a hardline government. Syria is not optimistic that the names associated with this future government will help advance the peace process.

Responsible sources told Radio Monte Carlo that the issue is merely an attempt to divert attention from what is going on in Israel, noting that there are no disturbances taking place in Syria — a fact which can be proved by all the foreign embassies which are aware of the extent of stability in Syria.

The sources said that these are bubbles in the air and intrigues that do not change facts, adding that the U.S. statement was ambiguous, that it did not explain where the explosions occurred although the United States has its own means which qualify it to ascertain the facts about such things.

Syria: 'Sources' Cited on Alleged Explosions, Chemical Gas Plant

JN0506165796 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1500 GMT 5 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Syria is awaiting the outcome of Arab meetings. Meanwhile, President al-Asad called for an Arab mobilization to face up to the Likud election win. In the meantime, attempts to pressure Syria continued. A few days ago, Washington reported explosions in Syria, whereas a German media organization reported that Damascus is building a chemical plant near Aleppo.

The Syrian reaction is contained in a report by our correspondent Thana' al-Imam:

[Begin al-Imam recording] Syria is coming under a campaign of criticism, accusations, and allegations from the north to the south and from Washington too. Syrian political quarters believe that this campaign is aimed to divert attention from the Israeli attempts to form a hardline government. Syria is not optimistic that the names associated with this future government will help advance the peace process.

Responsible Syrian sources received the U.S. State Department statement about explosions with disregard and consternation, particularly due to its timing and ambiguity. Additionally, the responsible sources criticized a report published in the German magazine STERN, which quoted Western intelligence sources as saying that Syria is trying to build a chemical gas plant in Aleppo similar to the Libyan Tarhunah plant. Speaking to Monte Carlo Radio, the sources wondered: Why are they trying to obscure the fact that Israel is in possession of all devastating nuclear and chemical weapons, whereas the

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acquisition of a single rifle by any Arab side provokes concern and problems?

The sources added: We are in a state of hostility with Israel. All peoples have the right to acquire all the means that enable them to engage in self-defense. The fabrication of all these problems and crises is aimed at serving Israel. It is the duty of all Arabs to work together to face up to Israeli extremism.

The sources indicated that the tripartite summit due to be held in Saudi Arabia next week among Presidents al-Asad and Mubarak and King Fahd will lay the groundwork for an expanded summit that will specify the responsibilities of Arab sides, each according to its means. [end recording]

Syria: Official—No Security Problem; Chemical Weapons Claim Not Denied

MM0606101296 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 6 Jun 96 pp 1, 6

[Report by Ibrahim Humaydi: "Damascus: We Are the Most Stable State"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Damascus — A high-ranking Syrian official stressed yesterday that there is no "security disruption" in Syria, which is "the most stable and secure state in the region, in which "there is no country without domestic troubles."

He said that the U.S. Embassy's statement about explosions in Syria recently is designed "to divert attention from what is happening in Israel" after Likud leader Binyamin Netanyahu's victory in the recent elections.

The senior Syrian official did not deny the report published by the German magazine STERN, which says that Syria is building a chemical weapons factory. He said: "We are in a state of hostility (with Israel), and every people is entitled to possess self-defense means." He expressed his amazement at the failure of the circles talking of "the threat to humanity" to "denounce" the Hebrew state's possession of nuclear and nonnuclear weapons.

The Syrian official made his statement after the reports of explosions in Syria. A statement issued by the U.S. Embassy in Damascus the day before yesterday said that "there are reports of explosions in several locations in Syria over the past month." The statement advised the U.S. community in Syria to be cautious.

The Syrian official said that "these machinations are not new. They are part of the machinations aimed at diverting attention from what is happening in Israel after Netanyahu's victory." He added: "The timing proves that they are soap bubbles and rumors, because they come after the elections, when the statement says that they (the explosions) occurred a month ago."

The official stressed that "there is no country without troubles, and Syria is the only country experiencing stability in the region — there is no security disruption and we are experiencing stability and security." He said that the reports are designed to "distort this atmosphere of stability." He added: "If the explosions really did take place, the State Department's statement should have given details, instead of providing unclear possibilities, despite the United States' possession of equipment and satellites capable of leading it to the facts. Why all these soap bubbles and rumors? Are they designed to divert attention from what is happening after the Likud victory?"

The senior Syrian official pointed out: "In the light of the new changes and developments emerging with the Likud's assumption of power in Israel, we expect nothing but the restoration of tension to this region, because this is part of the Likud's policy." The official stressed that the possibility of Ari'el Sharon, Yitzhaq Mordekhay, and Refa'el Eytan — "who are known for their hostility and aggression and for being the symbols of Zionist fanaticism in Israel — holding ministerial posts causes us to be pessimistic about these symbols' ability to work to reinforce the peace process." He added: "Netanyahu's recent statement and latest speech do not reflect any positive indications or intentions."

On the STERN report, which says that U.S. intelligence services had supplied German intelligence services with information to the effect that German experts are helping Syria to build a chemical gases factory in the north of the country, the high-ranking Syrian official said: "We are amazed that they should raise such issues while they continue to ignore the nuclear and chemical weapons in Israel's possession. They say nothing about Israeli nuclear weapons, but when they hear that an Arab has a rifle, they call it a threat to humanity."

The official did not deny the reports in question. He pointed out: "We are in a state of hostility (with Israel), and every people is entitled to possess self-defense means. No one is denouncing Israel's possession of all types of destructive weapons, nuclear and nonnuclear, or its refusal to sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty." He added that the Hebrew state is "the only aggressive power in the region and has achieved expansion at the expense of its Arab neighbors." He called on world states to "look at the region comprehensively, not in a partial manner that accuses one country and clears another."

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Syria: Minister—Relations With Christopher Not 'Personal'

MM0606110396 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 6 Jun 96 p 4

[Report by Ibrahim 'Awad in Damascus: "Our Relations With Christopher Are Not Personal; We Are Entitled To Possess Any Weapons We Want"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Syrian Information Minister Dr. Muhammad Salman said that he hopes that the Saudi-Syrian-Egyptian tripartite summit will be a prelude to a broader and more comprehensive summit. In an interview with AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT he said that it is hoped that the Arab states' leaders will meet to discuss all issues of concern to their homelands and reinforce the Arab ranks' unity and Arab solidarity in order to face the next phase, especially after Likud leader Binyamin Netanyahu's victory in the Israeli elections.

On the possibility that Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad might soon meet with Palestinian Authority President Yasir 'Arafat, Minister Salman said that "Syria's call for Arab meetings does not exclude anyone. Everyone is invited to attend these meetings and work together to thwart the conspiracies aimed at upsetting the Arab arena and undermining its stability and security." Salman said that such meetings can provide a response to Israeli intentions, pointing in this context to the open invitation issued by President al-Asad after his recent meeting with President Husni Mubarak on the need for Arab alertness so that "we are not taken by surprise."

Dr. Salman said that, following Netanyahu's election, he feels pessimistic about the peace process moving forward "in view of the positions that we have heard, either during his election rallies or recently in what he called his 'victory speech.'"

Salman said that "the Israelis have made their views on the peace process known in the Israeli elections by voting for the one who wanted to throw a monkey wrench in the works" and said that Syria was not surprised at Netanyahu's victory "because the Israeli people's education and guidance is based on hostility to the Arab nation and everything Arab."

The Syrian information minister stressed that Syria is convinced of the need to work for a just and honorable peace, based on the Madrid conference and the implementation of international [UN] Resolutions 242 and 338, up to Resolution 425. Minister Salman described the U.S. State Department's statement issued the day before yesterday, which urged U.S. citizens "to exercise caution and review their security arrangements following reports of several explosions in several Syrian locations over the past month," as "absurd and unfounded," and explained that "any citizen or any visitor to Syria can feel the stability that the country enjoys. It is no exaggeration to say that Syria is a country with the highest degree of stability and security." Salman said that the U.S. State Department's statement was intended to divert the world's attention from what is taking place in Israel "especially with regard to the formation of the government and the rise of the symbols of fanaticism and hatred toward the Arab people in it." The Syrian information minister wondered why the U.S. State Department did not publish this information at the right time, which according to the statement's contents was about a month ago, and said that "the Israeli elections results were not available then and there was no reason for such contrived reports."

Salman accused a U.S. Administration team of being behind such reports and hampering the peace process. He described this team as "Zionist and hostile to the Arabs" and also pointed out that the U.S. Administration is convinced about the peace process and making efforts to advance it, but that the existence of such a group "hampers attempts to advance this peace process in order to satisfy Zionist desires and interests."

On U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's recent criticism of Syria, Dr. Salman said that "relations with the U.S. secretary of state are not a personal matter," stressing that, as the United States' representative, each time Christopher visits Syria, he is welcomed cordially and respectfully. During his recent tour in the wake of the Israeli aggression against Lebanon, the U.S. secretary of state spent a considerable amount of time traveling between Syria, Lebanon, and Israel. Because of Israeli procrastination with regard to ending its aggression against Lebanon, more time was required and this made him react in this manner. It was Shim'on Peres, rather than Syria or Lebanon, who was responsible for this situation.

In the German DER SPIEGEL [as published; AL-HAYAH report on same topic attributes the report to STERN] report concerning the existence of a toxic gas manufacturing plant near Aleppo, which was spotted by U.S. satellites, Minister Salman neither denied nor confirmed that such a plant exists, and said: "Syria is entitled to possess any weapons it deems necessary to face up to its enemies. Let those who demand the limitation of nuclear weapon proliferation ask Israel why it has refused to ratify the [nuclear Non-Proliferation] Treaty and why it has gone ahead with setting up mass destruction plants without any control or supervision."

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Syria: Bahraini Minister Lauds Syrian Position on Bahrain, Departs

JN0506193496 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0815 GMT 5 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Bahraini Education Minister 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Fadil left Damascus this morning at the end of a visit to Syria during which he met with President Hafiz al-Asad.

He was seen off at Damascus International Airport by Minister of Education Muhammad Ghassan al-Halabi, and Bahraini Ambassador in Damascus Muhammad Hamad al-Muhaymid.

In a statement to the correspondent of the Syrian Arab News Agency, SANA, al-Fadil hailed the pioneering positions on Arab issues of Syria, under the leadership of President Hafiz al-Asad. He said these positions are known and firm, and that they demonstrate Arab solidarity and support inter-Arab relations.

He added: During my meeting with President al-Asad, I felt full understanding of the recent developments in Bahrain.

He described bilateral relations and fraternal bonds between Syria and Bahrain as good and strong, and said these relations are developing in service of the mutual interests.

Syria: Papers on Cairo Summit, Need for Arab 'Solidarity'

JN0506193796 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0450 GMT 5 Jun 96

[From the press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] In a commentary headlined "Pan-Arab Alert," AL-THAWRAH says the summit between Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Husni Mubarak has great significance. The summit shows their continuous efforts to promote relations between the two countries in all domains and enhance sincere cooperation to boost joint Arab action to match challenges.

AL-THAWRAH notes that the strong Syrian-Egyptian ties inspire hope that inter-Arab relations could be mended after they had suffered a series of serious setbacks, which drove some people to rush toward Israel under the umbrella of separate agreements. Thus, some Arabs have become a source of strength for Israel and a point of weakness for all the Arabs. Israel has not refrained from manifesting some serious aspects of its plans to dominate the region through the Israeli-Turkish alliance. This alliance poses a clear threat to pan-Arab security.

AL-THAWRAH says if this weak Arab situation remains unchanged, then this will be an excellent tool in the hand of Israel to pursue its schemes of hegemony, domination, and expansion. Israel's return to the slogans of Greater Israel and Torah Israel will have serious consequences.

The paper concludes that a thorough look at this situation prompted President Hafiz al-Asad to declare a state of pan-Arab alert. Breaking developments in the region indicate that things are not going in a positive direction, as President al-Asad asserted. We should be vigilant and alert, and should deal with our issues in a manner that meets the needs of our people and nation.

Under the headline "Road for Arabs' Salvation," TISHRIN stresses the importance of the summit held two days ago between Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Husni Mubarak. The significance of this summit stems primarily from the fact that it was held after the victory of the Likud, which is allied with the rest of the extremist parties, in the Israeli elections. The summit provided an opportunity to make a general assessment of this development and its impact on the peace process. The summit is also a serious step toward reviving Arab solidarity and reactivating joint Arab action.

TISHRIN says the Likud's assumption of power in Israel has produced new realities regarding the peace process and created new challenges for the Arab nation. In spite of all attempts to give the Likud a chance and to ask the Arabs to wait before they take a position toward the new Israeli Government, there are facts that cannot be disregarded. First, the platform of the Likud Party and its allies ignores one of the most important principles on which the peace process was based, which is the exchange of land for peace. The Likud asserted its refusal to withdraw from the Golan and Jerusalem and reembraced the peace-for-peace formula. The Likud leader was very clear in his speech a few days ago when he ignored the Syrian and Lebanese tracks and the PLO and adhered to Jerusalem as an eternal capital of Israel. The Likud leader made it clear that his government's objective was to achieve the old Zionist dream of setting up Greater Torah Israel.

TISHRIN adds: We must note that Netanyahu will encounter great difficulties if he seeks to abandon these extremist slogans and commit himself to the principles of the peace process in the future. The reason for this is the extremist religious and other political parties that supported the Likud in its election campaign. Another thing that cannot be hidden is that the majority of the Israelis declared — through the recent elctions — their rejection of the principles of a just peace and elected

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the most extremist and aggressive forces in the Israeli community.

The paper says: For these reasons, Presidents al-Asad and Mubarak were not optimistic about the commitment of Netanyahu's government to the principles of a just and comprehensive peace in the future. Such a serious situation mandates that the Arabs act quickly and mobilize all their capabilities to revive solidarity to face the upcoming challenges. The continuation of this bad Arab situation, which is characterized by divisions, infighting, and marginal disputes, will lead to a real tragedy that will hit the entire Arab nation and threaten its existence and future. The extremist Israeli forces will escalate aggression against the Arabs and expand occupation.

The paper concludes: Recent developments require all the Arabs, without exception, to rise above bilateral differences and revive the institutions of joint Arab action. All efforts should be geared toward building real Arab solidarity that ends the state of weakness. Wasting time under the pretext of waiting to find out the policies of the new Israeli government means giving the forces of extremism and aggression another chance to get back at the Arabs. Serious measures are now required to revive Arab solidarity and fraternity and let bygones be bygones. Adhering to solidarity, integration, and unity is the only road for the Arab nation's salvation.

Syria: Commentary—'Apprehension' About Likud Victory 'Justified'

JN0506202996 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1134 GMT 5 Jun 96

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: Following the announcement of the results of Israeli elections, political observers in various countries expressed their fear about the future of the Middle East peace process. The results of these elections showed that a large proportion of the Israelis rejects peace and supports the course of extremism and fanaticism. The Israeli mass media did not conceal this fact. They noted that hatred for Arabs and rejection of peace were the major reaons for the success of the Likud Party and other radical religious parties.

In light of this, it is natural for all those who want peace to express their fear. The new Israeli prime minister came to power after raising slogans of hostility to peace and commitment to occupation, expansion of settlements, keeping Jerusalem as the unified and eternal capital of the State of Israel, and disregard for the agreements arrived at by the previous government. When the new Israeli prime minister speaks about peace, he means the Israeli peace that is based on control and hegemony, not the peace of the international legitimacy and its resolutions.

True, he spoke during his electoral campaign about his readiness to return to the Madrid conference, but he did not explain the objective of this return. Does he want the peace process to return to the foundations of Madrid, which are based on international legitimacy and the American initiative? Or does he want to return to the slogan of his predecessor Shamir; i.e. peace for peace?

The experience of the past years proved that it is impossible to circumvent the Madrid land-for-peace formula. The governments of Rabin and Peres tried to obtain peace; maintain, at the same time, the occupied land or part of it; and not acknowledge rights. They failed. Any new attempt of this kind is bound to fail.

However, there is a question that should be raised: What are the reasons behind this intransigent Israel position? The Israelis consider themselves God's chosen people and that they are above all peoples. They are convinced of this. However, the fact that the international community turns a blind eye to the Israeli practices; agrees to keep Israel outside the framework of the international legitimacy and its resolutions; and extends military, political, and moral support to it deepened this conviction. This prompted the Israelis to ignore the right of others to demand their land, resist occupation, and urge the establishment of a just and comprehensive peace.

Given this situation, which is open to all possibilities, the Arabs should remain alert and mobilize forces to support their positions. The Israelis proceed from the principle that weakening any Arab state and dealing with it individually will eventually lead to weakening the entire Arab position. Therefore, unifying ranks and adopting a unified position will weaken the Israeli maneuver. The international community and its active forces should exert intensified efforts to advance the peace process. Peace cannot be made by words and wishes, but rather through actions and creating the conditions that are conducive to it. Creating such conditions requires adhering to the international legitimacy and forcing all parties to abide by it. This necessitates creating a state of balance in the region, returning Israel to the international fold, and forcing it to adhere to the foundations and principles of the Madrid conference.

Dealing leniently with the Israeli proposals on peace and security and extending military, economic, and political support to Israel will not prompt it to proceed toward peace. On the contrary, this support nourished its fanaticism and rejection of a just and comprehensive peace. Syria has frequently asserted its commitment

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to peace as a strategic option and stressed that Israel places obstacles to the march of the peace process. The world today bears witness to the truth of Syria's vision and to the reality of the Israeli position. The world's apprehension is justified as it was basically generated by the declared Israeli positions. Nevertheless, Syria once again emphasizes its commitment to a just and comprehensive peace based on international legitimacy and its resolutions. When Israel is ready and prepared for this peace, we will see that the aspired peace will permeate the region.

Syria: Press Views Likud Party Policies, Calls For Arab Solidarity

JN0606105196 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0455 GMT 6 May 96

[Press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] Under the headline "The Arabs Are at a Critical Juncture," the newspaper AL-BA'TH comments on the latest developments and how the Arabs should confront these developments. AL-BA'TH stresses that Binyamin Netanyahu's policy is no secret to any Arab. Consequently, it is aimed against all Arabs.

AL-BA'TH says: Netanyahu wants security, peace, control, power, supremacy over the Arabs, and a free hand over the region and its resources. He has no respect for the international legitimacy or its resolutions. Such a policy is not aimed at only one Arab country or a particular Arab group, but it seriously threatens all Arabs. The Zionist ambitions Netanyahu is trying to achieve are old ones. They are the cause of the plight in the region and of the absence of peace, security, and stability.

AL-BA'TH speaks about natural self-defense and wonders: Is it not natural for the Arab nation to defend itself?

AL-BA'TH stresses: One cannot rely on separate and incomplete solutions. These solutions have failed because they do not meet the minimum level of pan-Arab demands.

AL-BA'TH says: Since there is no magic wand to make the Arab leaders meet under such critical circumstances, the leaders who feel the danger and assume their pan-Arab responsibilities should find a nucleus for a unified Arab action to pool Arab resources in order to safeguard the Arab nation.

AL-BA'TH explains: The best way to clarify this is to use what President Hafiz al-Asad said at the joint news conference with President Mubarak in Cairo, to the effect that we do not now have the feeling that matters are proceeding positively, and therefore, we should be alert so that we will not be deceived.

AL-BA'TH concludes: At this critical juncture, we have no choice but to resume the joint Arab action, whose beginnings emerged at the Cairo summit between Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Husni Mubarak, so that its Arab base will be broader and more capable of facing the future challenges, particularly stopping deterioration in the Arab situation and protecting the Arabs' dignity from a humiliating peace or disgraceful capitulation.

Under the headline "Extremism," the newspaper AL-THAWRAH comments of the policy of the Likud leaders who openly reject the land-for-peace principle, stress that they will continue to establish settlements and insist on maintaining Jerusalem as their eternal capital.

AL-THAWRAH says: What these leaders are saying paints a very dark picture of future security and stability in the region. The peace process will enter a dark tunnel, with no way out. In addition, statements will only strengthen the feelings of rancor and hatred and leave the door wide open before serious possibilities that might drown the region in an endless whirlpool of violence and counterviolence.

AL-THAWRAH calls on the international community to contain the coming Israeli extremism, curb Israel's hostility, and prevent the collapse of hopes for peace and stability in the region.

AL-THAWRAH speaks about the imminent danger that threatens the Arabs as a result of the Israeli policy. It says: The Arabs must now prove, more than at any other time in the past, that they are one nation that will not submit, surrender, or capitulate to the enemies' ambitions and schemes. The Arab nation is living nation that does not relinquish its rights or a single inch of its land, whatever the circumstances and reasons may be.

AL-THAWRAH also calls for Arab solidarity and coordination and for unifying Arab ranks. It points out: No matter how big the differences among the sons of the one nation may be, the pan-Arab bond among them should remain above all considerations.

AL-THAWRAH concludes: The current situation in the region constitutes a good reason for real and effective solidarity. President Hafiz al-Asad has always called for this to safeguard the nation's dignity, to defend its rights, and to save its future and that of its future generations.

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Afghanistan

Afghanistan: Iran's Borujerdi Holds Talks With Rabbani in Kabul

LD0506200896 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Pashto 1230 GMT 5 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister 'Ala'eddin Borujerdi in talks with Afghan President Borhanoddin Rabbani in Kabul on Tuesday [4 June] discussed recent developments in Afghanistan and relations between the two countries. During the meeting Borujerdi conveyed to Rabbani warm greetings from Iranian President Hashemi-Rafsanjani and told him about his and other Iranian officials' happiness with the recent agreement between the Islamic State of Afghanistan and Hekmatyar's Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party].

Borujerdi also said that the government of Iran supports any measure that will lead to peace and calm in Afghanistan.

In appreciation of Iran's peace efforts, Rabbani said: Iran has been the force behind talks between the Afghan government and Hezb-e Eslami, and the recent agreement has been a result of its valuable efforts.

Borujerdi, who arrived in Afghanistan Monday night [3 June], has thus far met with the leader of the National and Islamic Movement of Afghanistan and the acting foreign minister of Afghanistan.

Afghanistan: Iran's Borujerdi Arrives in Bamian for Talks on Conflict

LD0506161796 Tehran IRNA in English 1422 GMT 5 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kabul, June 5, IRNA — Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Asia-Pacific Affairs 'Ala'eddin Borujerdi and his entourage arrived in Bamian on Wednesday to hold talks with one of the leaders of Hezb-e Wahdat Abdol Karim Khalili on ways of putting an end to the regional conflicts.

Borujerdi had earlier met with leader of Afghan National-Islamic Movement in Mazar-e Sharif, the capital of the Afghan province of Balkh as well as with Afghan President Borhanoddin Rabbani, commander-in-chief of Afghan government's military forces Ahmad Shah Mas'ud, Deputy Prime Minister and head of the Central Council of Hezb-e Harakat-e Eslami Hojjat ol-Eslam Mohammad Javid and Head of the Central Council of another branch of Hezb-e Wahdat Hojjat ol-Eslam Mohammad Akbari in Kabul.

In his meeting with Borujerdi, Mas'ud thanked Iran for its continued efforts to help his country solve its internal crisis, saying such efforts will remain in the political history of Afghanistan and the Afghan people will never forget them. He said that although the Afghan government was striving to bring about understanding among all opposition groups, it would confront war mongering groups. He said that military conditions were favorable in battle fields and that political developments would create better conditions in future.

Borujerdi expressed satisfaction with positive developments in Afghanistan and said that Iran was strongly in this belief that political understanding among the warring sides would be the best way of solving current problems in Afghanistan. He added that Iran was ready to continue its efforts to help Afghanistan solve its current problems.

In another meeting on Tuesday, Borujerdi and Javid discussed Tehran-Kabul cooperation and ways of holding the first session of a Iran-Afghanistan joint economic commission. Javid said that Afghan officials were now witnessing the positive impacts of Iran's ceaseless efforts in solving Afghan crisis and were hopeful that the first session of Tehran-Kabul joint economic commission could open a new chapter in mutual cooperation. He underlined that his party was for peace and understanding.

Borujerdi said in reply that the first session of the joint economic commission would further expand bilateral ties in all areas.

Bangladesh

Bangladesh: Hasina Alleges 'Conspiracy' To Foil Elections

BK0606024396 Dhaka DAINIK ITTEFAQ in Bengali 24 May 96 p 1, 12 and 11

[FBIS Translated Text] Addressing a crowded press conference at the National Press Club yesterday, Awami League President Sheikh Hasina called for immediately transferring all executive powers, including the charge of the Defense Ministry, to the caretaker government. She also urged the caretaker government to recover illegal arms, arrest those in possession of illegal arms, order an inquiry into the corruption of those who plundered public property and hold their trial, prepare a flawless voters list, and ensure free, fair, and impartial holding of elections. The Awami League leader said that the people will support all steps taken by the caretaker government, and that her party will also stand beside the caretaker government.

Sheikh Hasina cautioned the people about the deep-rooted conspiracy of the ousted Bangladesh Nationalist Party [BNP] government. She said that Khaleda Zia and her BNP had opposed the formation of a nonparty

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neutral caretaker government. The BNP is now engaged in a sinister design to make the caretaker government weak and ineffective, and to make it a stooge in the hands of President Abdur Rahman Biswas, who belongs to the party, with a view to recapture power through vote dacoity and rigging. The president has tried to weaken, cripple, and deactivate the caretaker government by misusing the powers given to him by the constitutional amendment made by the so-called parliament formed after the 15 February elections. On the other hand, to protect the interests of the ousted BNP, the president at his own initiative made decisions relating to the Defense Ministry and totally ignored the caretaker government by making these decisions without its knowledge. This created alarm and tension in the Army.

Sheikh Hasina said the country is facing a new crisis today. She said that at the call given by opposition parties, the people of the country had participated in a long drawn out agitation in a constitutional manner with a view to safeguard democracy and realize their rights to vote and food. This democracy was achieved after the mass upsurge of 1990 during which the people sacrificed a lot of blood. The Awami League leader said people from all walks of life and professions took part in this agitation and forced the corrupt, terrorist, and vote-dacoit BNP government to resign. This was achieved at the cost of many lives, blood, property, and sacrifices. People discarded the repression, torture, and conspiracy of the erstwhile government and continued their struggle establish the present neutral caretaker government for the purpose of holding a free and impartial elections in the country.

The Awami League president said that Khaleda Zia and her ousted BNP had not only opposed the formation of this neutral caretaker government, but also termed the demand for the formation of a caretaker government as an impractical and whimsical demand of a child or a lunatic. The BNP was compelled to accept this demand of the people following a long and bloody agitation. From the very beginning, the BNP was indulging in various conspiracies against this demand. Before relinquishing power, the BNP, in accordance with its sinister designs, held a one-party and voterless election on 15 February. This election was largely rigged and the so-called parliament formed after the election passed the 13th constitution amendment bill transfer the charge of the Defense Ministry from the chief adviser of the caretaker government to the president in violation of the parliamentary system of government. From the very beginning, we have been urging the countrymen to remain cautious about this deep-rooted conspiracy of the ousted BNP government.

Sheikh Hasina said that the ousted BNP is engaged in a sinister conspiracy to recapture power by making the caretaker government weak, ineffective, and a stooge in the hands of President Abdur Rahman Biswas, who belongs to the BNP. The objective of the BNP is to rig the elections through conspiracy. Begum Zia became alarmed when the caretaker government launched a countrywide drive to recover illegal arms and started arresting the thugs and terrorists of the ousted BNP government. She openly protested the arrest of these arms holders and alleged that the caretaker government was not impartial. The BNP leader even threatened to boycott the elections if the arrests of those in possession of illegal arms are not stopped and to topple the caretaker government. She also showed her audacity by threatening to kill eminent poets, artistes, litterateurs, journalists, intellectuals, government officials, and employees. After the BNP was ousted from power, the nation's newspapers published a series of reports on the corruption, misrule, and pilferage of the BNP government. This frightened the BNP leaders and they became reckless. Attacks were launched on newspaper offices and threats were made against the lives of journalists. Overlooking all this, when the people of the country proceeded along the path to holding free, fair, and neutral elections for consolidating the hard-earned democracy, the ousted BNP realized that it would suffer defeat in the forthcoming elections and it became engaged in a deep-rooted conspiracy to discard democracy in a planned way and deprive the people of their voting rights.

Sheikh Hasina said that the ousted BNP attempted to implement the blueprint of their conspiracy through President Abdur Rahman Biswas, who belongs to the party. Khaleda Zia's threats to boycott the elections and topple the caretaker government are all external manifestations of this conspiracy. The president played the role of a silent spectator during the two-year-long political crisis that prevailed in the country. After the formation of the caretaker government, the president became active in weakening, crippling, and deactivating the caretaker government by misusing the powers vested in him through the 13th amendment of the Constitution, which was passed by the parliament that was formed after the rigged elections held on 15 February. With a view to protecting the interests of the ousted BNP, the president made one controversial decision after another and destabilized the overall situation.

The recent action concerning the Defense Ministry that was taken by the president at his own initiative, just a few days before the elections, was done without the knowledge of the caretaker government. It has created an alarming situation in the country. As a result of this unprecedented and unilateral decision, a tense situation

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has been created in the Army, which is the symbol of the country's independence, sovereignty, national solidarity, and unity. This has created the fear of disunity in the Army. The people have reacted seriously to this action taken by the president.

Sheikh Hasina said that in the president's address broadcast to the nation over the radio and television, the president stated that he has taken action regarding the Army after discussing the overall issue with the chief of the caretaker government. On the other hand, the chief adviser, in his address broadcast to the nation over the radio and television just a few hours after the president's address, said that the president has taken action relating to the Army at his own initiative. In this situation, a question has arisen in the minds of the people: Which of these two contradictory statements are correct? In the meantime, it has become clear to the nation that the president did not give the correct facts to the people in his address to the nation. This has tarnished the dignity of the highest and most important office of the president. In view of the prevailing situation, a question has obviously arisen in the minds of the people of the country as to whose government exists in the country at present. Is it the caretaker government of Justice Habibur Rahman, or is it the party government of BNP led by President Abdur Rahman Biswas?

The Awami League president added that President Biswas in his address to the nation informed the people that some members of the Armed Forces had established links with a political party. On the other hand, General Nasim, the recently sacked Army Chief, in an interview with the BBC prior to his dismissal said, "Whatever President Abdur Rahman Biswas has done is motivated and has sinister designs. He said this has been done with a view to prevent the caretaker government from holding free, fair, and impartial elections." This incident has led the people of the country to believe that our Armed Forces have been made controversial and that a quarter has taken a mischievous step to use the Armed Forces in the interest of a political party. This step taken by the president has made it clear to the people that President Abdur Rahman Biswas, as the head of the state, has failed to maintain neutrality during a time of national crisis. Apart from this, he has tarnished the dignity of the highest office of president by not giving the correct facts to the people of the country. Instead of performing the responsibility of the head of a government, he has acted as a representative of the BNP chief with a view to protecting the interests of the ousted BNP. This attitude of the president is contrary to the fundamental principles of the caretaker government and is equivalent to rejecting the basic foundation of the caretaker government. This attitude of the president is bound to be regarded as contrary to the victory achieved by the people after a long struggle and at the cost of a lot of sacrifices. It is also regarded as contradictory to democracy, opposed to the system of caretaker government, and against the elections to be held on 12 June.

Sheikh Hasina has called upon the people to remain vigilant during this moment of crisis, and build up resistance against all conspiracies to foil the elections. She added that recent incidents have clearly shown that the caretaker government cannot function independently by keeping the charge of the Defense Ministry under the president. It may not be possible to hold free and impartial elections in the country. People fear that the president may again become active in protecting the interests of the BNP if it appears that the party is going to lose the elections. In this situation, I want to emphatically state that under no circumstances will the people of the country allow any attempts to foil the victory that has been achieved after a lot of sacrifices and bloodshed. Any conspiracy to foil the elections will be resisted at any cost. I demand immediate transfer of the charge of the Defense Ministry and all other executive powers to the caretaker government. At the same time, I request the caretaker government recover illegal arms, arrest those in possession of illegal arms, institute an inquiry into the corruption and plundering of public property and hold trial of the persons responsible for it, make the voters list flawless, and ensure free, fair, and impartial holding of elections. I want to categorically state that this caretaker government is not a gift given by any kind person. The people have established this neutral caretaker government after a long struggle during which they suffered much repression and shed a lot of blood. The people will certainly support all steps taken by the caretaker government to protect democracy and the voting rights of the people and to hold free, fair, and impartial elections. We will also stand beside the chief adviser. We believe that those who are indulging in conspiracy against the rights of the people will surely be defeated. The victory of the people can never be foiled by resorting to conspiracy and exercising force. The Awami League leader made a fervent appeal to the people of the country to give a befitting reply to the conspirators and resist all conspiracies centering the forthcoming elections by casting their votes in favor of candidates nominated by the Awami League for the implementation of 21-point socioeconomic development program of the party.

In reply to a question regarding the 17 cassettes containing the record of the so-called contacts and talks between the retired Army chief and a political party, the Awami League leader demanded publication of these records. She also demanded publication of the names

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of government officials who visited the BNP office on the night of 22 May and also the discussions held with them.

Bangladesh: Political Parties Asked To Abide by 'Code of Conduct'

BK0606050096 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in Bengali 1500 GMT 5 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Chief Election Commissioner Mohammad Abu Hena has called upon the rival political parties, candidates, and political workers to strictly abide by the Election Code of Conduct in order to ensure peaceful elections. He was addressing a meeting of local eminent people, political leaders, and concerned officials in Sylhet today. Hena said it is the duty of every voter to exercise their vote with a view to making the forthcoming general elections meaningful. The chief election commissioner said that the administrative officials who will conduct the elections have already been given the necessary directives to maintain neutrality. He warned that appropriate action will be taken against those who will fail to perform their duty.

Over 400,000 members of the Army, Bangladesh Rifles, police, and paramilitary forces will be deployed in order to maintain law and order during the parliamentary elections, which are scheduled for 12 June. This was disclosed at a coordinated meeting of the concerned law enforcement agencies held in Dhaka today. The meeting was informed that the program to deploy members of the law enforcement agencies at the field level has already been finalized. The meeting was also informed that the Armed Forces will assist in the maintenance of law and order. Meanwhile, a committee headed by the additional secretary of the Ministry of Home has been formed with a view to coordinate the law and order situation during the elections. The meeting emphasized the need for coordination among the various security agencies deployed for election duty. The meeting was presided over the Syed Rezaul Hayat, the home secretary. It was attended by, among others, Major General Anwarul Kabir Talukdar, director general of Ansar [paramilitary forces] and Village Defense Party; Azizul Haq, Inspector General of police; Brigadier A.N. Fazlur Rahman, director of the Armed Forces Division; and representatives of the Navy, Army, Air Force, Bangladesh Rifles, and coast guards.

India

India: UF Releases Common Minimum Program, Congress Reacts

BK0606035396 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1530 GMT 5 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Faster economic growth with social justice and promotion of federalism and secularism are the salient features of the common minimum program of the United Front government. The 25-page policy document, which was released by the prime minister in New Delhi today, also envisages level playing field for domestic industry, discouraging the entry of multinationals in low-priority areas, rehabilitation of sick public sector units, and setting up of a tariff commission to resolve tax disputes and a disinvestment commission. We will bring you details later in this bulletin.

The Congress has declined to comment on the common minimum program announced by the ruling United Front. The party spokesman, Mr. V.N. Gadgil, told newspersons that time is needed to study the 25-page document released by the prime minister, Mr. H.D. Deve Gowda, earlier in the day. Asked whether the Congress, largest supporting party to the minority United Front, was consulted in the matter or whether it had given any guidelines in this regard, Mr. Gadgil said he had no knowledge about it.

The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] has demanded an extension of the Lok Sabha session beginning on Monday [10 June] by a day or two. The party spokesperson, Mrs. Sushma Swaraj, told media persons that as the house will adjourn after paying tributes to the former president on the 10th, there should be at least a two-day discussion on the confidence motion. The party wanted the session to be telecast live as was done before. Referring to the United Front's common approach and minimum program, Mrs. Swaraj said it is a jumble of confused thoughts and contradictory ideas.

The Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India, Assocham, has welcomed the United Front government's economic agenda as unveiled in the common minimum program document which was released today. In a statement, it has said the government's assurance of a level playing field for domestic industry and the commitment to continue the economic reforms reflects the front's attempts to evolve realistic policies and programs.

The president of the Confederation of Indian Industry, Mr. Shekhar Datta, described the program as positive and fast breaking:

[Begin Datta recording] It is positive because of the fact that the government is considering a GDP growth

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of 7 percent, industrial growth of 12 percent, and at the same time not forgetting the social thrust in terms of education, literacy, health, and hygiene, including employment generation. They are all in right direction and we are very, very positive about it.

On the foreign investment, I am very pleased to see that the government is continuing encouragement of foreign direct investment in the country. They have talked about the fact that they would like to direct the investment more in the core sector and the infrastructure, which is exactly what we need in the country. They have talked about fiscal disincentives for the consumer goods industry — which perhaps, in the government's own way of thinking, is a right way of doing it — but the results will show whether we need to look at that at a later date. But on the whole, we think that they have got the right direction. [end recording]

We now have the details on the common minimum program announced by the United Front government. Madhunath reports:

[Begin recording] [Madhunath] It came up after 10 days of hard deliberations between the leaders of the 13-party coalition. The much-awaited common minimum program was released by the prime minister, who felt it was a necessity for removing the suspicion from the minds of the people:

[Gowda] All the secular parties, barring Congress and BJP, have combined to form the United Front. People have, thus, some sort of suspicions in mind that these political parties, though secular in character, had what is known as party manifesto which may not be identical [words indistinct] because each political party has got its own party manifesto and program.

[Madhunath] The common minimum program is primarily a policy document wherein the government will work out detailed plans within this framework.

[Janata Dal spokesman Jaipal Reddy] It is primarily a framework document; a policy document. It contains the basic direction and a broad thrust. Based on this framework document prepared by a steering committee, various ministries will work out detailed plans.

[Madhunath] The policy document highlights a faster economic growth and sets a target of seven percent per year in the next 10 years in order to abolish endemic poverty and unemployment. The United Front government is committed to maintaining a 12 percent annual growth in industrial sector with emphasis on level playing field to domestic industry. The government would also adopt growth-oriented policies that would lead to greater self-reliance. The document highlighted the pioneering role played by the public sector and assured its commitment to make them strong and globally competitive.

[Reddy] We did categorically say we will do everything to strengthen them, and in fact we said we will strengthen the mechanism. The BIFR [Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction] itself has become sick. Therefore, we are going to enact a new law to strengthen this mechanism.

[Madhunath] The common minimum program welcomes foreign investments in priority areas which will bring modern technology but whose clearance shall be on case-to-case basis. The document favors a competition in insurance sector drawing upon the experience in the banking.

[Reddy] We are permitting investment by MNC's [multinational corporations] in the infrastructure. That is very clear because we require huge investments in the infrastructure. We said in the next five years, we will require upwards of 700,000 crores. So that is why investments in infrastructure will be welcomed. As for special cases, the [word indistinct] would do on the merit of each case.

[Madhunath] The program calls for higher investment in agriculture and reviewing controls on the movement of agricultural products and improving the rural trade system to ensure that it grows up to 100 percent in the next five years. The program also envisages a national policy on water sharing and water management to save farmers from recurrent floods and droughts.

The United Front respects Article 370 of the Constitution and is committed to hold the elections to the Jammu and Kashmir state assembly as soon as possible.

[Reddy] Democratic process will be genuinely implemented in Kashmir. We believe the recent election held in Kashmir to Lok Sabha has strengthened the process of consultation. We, naturally, would like to talk to Pakistan. That was the essence of Simla pact.

[Madhunath] The Babri Masjid-Ram Janambhoomi [mosque-temple] dispute will be referred to the Supreme Court under Article 138-2 of the Constitution and steps will be taken to implement the protection of places of worship.

The United Front's program on foreign policy reaffirms India's demand for a permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council.

Answering a pointed query with respect to the telecom tender policy, the front's spokesman, Mr. Jaipal Reddy, said that the government believes in absolute transparency, particularly with respect to contracts and business deals.

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A bill to set up lokpal [ombudsman institution] will be introduced in the first budget session of the 11th Lok Sabha.

[Reddy] Lokpal will be naturally free not only to look into complaints over the deals to be transacted, but about the things already done. So, therefore, that will take care of both the past, present, and future.

[Madhunath] The document reiterates the need for continuing food security cover to the underprivileged by strengthening public distribution system. The prime minister, Mr. Deve Gowda, said his government will initiate steps for the speedy implementation.

[Gowda] Government will take all steps for the speedy implementation of the policies and programs which are unanimously accepted and we are releasing today for the benefit of the nation. [end recording]

India: Leaders React to Government's Common Minimum Program

BK0606110296 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 6 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Tamil Nadu chief minister, Mr. M. Karunanidhi, has welcomed the common minimum program announced by the UDF [United Democratic Front] government headed by Mr. Deve Gowda. Addressing a press conference in Madras this afternoon, the chief minister described the program as having continuity, change, and pragmatic approach to meet new challenges.

The Congress parliamentary party secretary, Mr. V. Narayanaswamy, has said that the common minimum program of the United Front government at the center contains neither any new policy nor proposes changes in the existing policies. Talking to newsmen in Pondicherry today, he said though Congress leaders in some states are opposed to the support extended by the Congress to the Deve Gowda ministry, the party is committed to support the United Front government from outside.

India: Delhi To Adopt Positive Response to Talks With Pakistan

BK0606104996 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 6 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The external affairs minister said that India will adopt a positive and expeditious response to any dialogue with Pakistan. In an interview to ANI [Asia News International], Mr. Inder Kumar Gujral described Pakistan as a very valued neighbor and said it is time that both the countries look at each other afresh. Welcoming the Pakistan prime minister, Ms. Benazir Bhutto's goodwill message to the prime minister, Mr. H.D. Deve Gowda, Mr. Gujral said there is great warmth and friendship at people-to-people level and it should be our endeavor to translate that goodwill into political reality. Mr. Gujral expressed the view that the two countries can sort out outstanding problems only through talks and discussion. On strengthening relations with all neighbors and India's contribution to SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation], Mr. Gujral said New Delhi will make every attempt to do more for neighbors than they can do for us as ours is a larger country. He also said India's large economy should be a great attraction to ASEAN countries and India, on her part, can contribute a great deal to their progress. The minister said the country's foreign policy focus will continue to be on the developed countries of the Nonaligned Movement.

Referring to India's relations with Arab countries, Mr. Gujral said New Delhi has consistently supported every Arab cause over the years. Indo-Arab relationship is highly cherished and India shall do everything toward making it more cooperative.

Iran

Iran: Tehran Recalls Ambassador From Bahrain

LD0606101496 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 6 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Islamic Republic of Iran has recalled its ambassador from Bahrain.

The action is taking place following sensational propaganda by the Bahraini Government against Iran in the past few days.

The spokesman of our country's Foreign Ministry said today: The Islamic Republic of Iran regards as uncalculated and hasty the measures taken by Manama, which resulted in reduction of political ties between the two countries. It believes that such decisions only ensure the aims and greed of the foreigners in the region.

Rejecting the baseless allegations of the Bahraini Government against the Islamic Republic of Iran, he stated that raising such allegations will prepare the ground for the bad intentions of the region's enemies.

Iran: Besharati Denies Bahraini Claims of Training Camps in Iran

LD0506184196 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 5 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In a meeting with the Qatari ambassador today, Interior Minister Mr. ['Ali Moham-

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mad] Besharati stressed the friendly relations between Iran and Qatar. He mentioned that the Islamic Republic of Iran's relations with other countries are based on the principle of non-intervention. He added: Today we see that some countries blame other countries for intervening in their domestic affairs without finding out the root cause of their domestic problems. He stressed that the internal affairs of Bahrain have nothing to do the Islamic Republic of Iran, and added: Blaming others will pave the way for the presence of foreign powers in this sensitive Persian Gulf region and will make the enemies of the region's peace, stability, and security rejoice.

The interior minister stressed: Despite the unfounded claims of the Bahraini government, there are no bases in Iran in which other countries' nationals undergo military training, and we strongly condemn interference in the domestic affairs of other countries.

Mr. Besharati also criticized the remarks made by a number of Arab countries' officials concerning the Iranian islands [reference to the Greater and Lesser Tunbs and Abu Musaj, and he stressed: Those islands have always belonged to Iran and will remain a part of Iran forever.

During the meeting, the Qatari ambassador to Iran, Mr. Kuari [as heard], submitted a message from the government of Qatar to Mr. Besharati, and said: Relations between the two countries of Iran and Qatar, even during the Iraqi imposed-war, have always been excellent.

Iran: Revolutionary Guard Training Camps Profiled

MM0506154996 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 5 Jun 96 pp 1, 4

[Unattributed report: "Revolutionary Guard Running 181 Training Camps in Iran"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Iranian Revolutionary Guard has 181 training bases and camps throughout Iran, some of which are large, such as al-Nasr camp in the northwest region of Iran, where Iraqi and Kurdish oppositionists are trained. Part of this camp is used to train elements of the revolutionary Kurdistan Workers' Party [PKK], which is waging a war against Turkey. There is also the "Khatam al-Anbiya'" camp near Tehran and the Wakilabad camp near Mashhad in the northeast of the country, where the Revolutionary Guard organizes special training courses for the militias of the Afghan Shiite Wahdah Party and Tajik revolutionaries.

Some of the Revolutionary Guard's camps were set up to train special groups. These camps do not conduct ordinary training courses for Revolutionary Guard elements or Basij-e elements (volunteers). They receive only revolutionary groups from outside Iran whose activities are financed by Iranian quarters.

The Manzariyah camp, situated on the Tehran-Qom road, was the first to be placed at the disposal of the Revolutionary Guard's "Liberation Movements Department" (in charge of the affairs of the revolutionary parties and organizations sympathizing with Iran in the region). As is known, there is a garden called Manzariyah north of Tehran near the late Iranian leader Ayatollah Khomeyni's headquarters. It was a base for the Iranian scout movement before the revolution. When the clerics seize power, the Manzariyah garden became a meeting place for revolutionaries from Lebanon, Palestine, and some Asian countries during the summer. These had received ideological and semi-military training in the Manzariyah garden until the revolutionary women's first meeting was held in 1986.

The Manzariyah camp near Qom has huge training capabilities, as mysterious military exercises are conducted with the participation of the Revolutionary Guard's special units. And "the revolution's sons" from Lebanon, Palestine, and other Arab and Islamic countries are trained in one part of this camp, which is separated by a thin fence from the other parts of the camp. Each training course includes 60 to 100 trainees, whose ages range between 15 and 25.

These normally enter Iran in groups. In the event of any difficulty to move them from their countries to Iran, they go to Syria or Cyprus, where they are received by representatives of the Revolutionary Guard's intelligence organ. They get entry visas to Iran separate from their passports. Their training courses tend to last six weeks to six months. In addition to military training, trainees are also brainwashed. The Islamic Information Organization is responsible for ideological training, while the Revolutionary Guard supervises military training.

Hundreds of Shiite students from Africa, Asia, and the Middle East, who study in the religious seminaries in Qom, attend military training courses in the Manzariyah camp. It seems that the elements arrested in Bahrain over recent days took part in military and ideological training courses at the Manzariyah camp and obtained a special diploma that could qualify them for a place in the "imaginary paradise" promised by Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati, official responsible for exporting the cultural revolution.

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Iran: Commentary on Repercussions of Iraq-UN Deal

NC0606082696 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 26 May 96 p 16

[Commentary by Heshmatollah Falahatpisheh: "The Oil-For-Food Exchange—Salvation for the Tyrant or Tyrannized"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Finally, on Monday this week [20 May] UN Security Council Resolution 986, described as the oil-for-food agreement, was signed by the negotiating sides, that is, Iraq and the United Nations.

According to the agreement, Iraq can sell $2 billion worth of oil every six months in order to supposedly purchase foodstuffs for its people, who have been under an embargo for six years. Some points worth mentioning in an assessment of the reasons, repercussions, and modus operandi of the Resolution, and the objectives of the main parties of the Resolution are:

1. At the height of his isolation, Saddam, is clutching at every straw in order to return to the international fold and regain recognition. In view of the interference of the United States and the United Nations, this requires a delicate balance if Saddam wishes to prevent the eroding of the national sovereignty of his government.

So far he has used the embargo as a pretext for appearing oppressed and has made efforts to project it as the sole reason for the misfortune of the Iraqi people. Under such circumstances, two trends, negative and positive, pertaining to Baghdad have surfaced in international politics in the past few months. Governments such as Russia, France, and even Britain, along with the Arab governments such as Oman and Qatar, and the regional players such as Turkey, deemed the continuation of embargoes as inhuman and called for their mitigation.

Conversely, the United States and some of the Arabs opposed to Iraq, such as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, believe that Saddam is attributing the domestic crisis to superficial extraneous reasons in order to attain his political objectives. These two conflicting trends finally reached common ground on the reduction of sanctions imposed on Iraq, even though their respective objectives are different.

The first group has its eyes on grabbing the economic and commercial opportunities of an Iraq in ruins, while the second group, especially Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, continue to harbor desires of the downfall of Saddam, with the United States ostensibly on their side. Washington, which is the main power behind the scenes of the United Nations, decided at this juncture to terminate its marathon [preceding word in English transliterated in Persian] talks.

2. Iraq and the United States, each with their distinctive objectives, have taken a few steps forward, with Iraq being forced to show a greater reaction than it did in the past. The human losses from the sanctions have also had an adverse effect on the controlling forces of the central government. Accordingly, Saddam was forced to relatively strengthen the levers of his power by accepting a further undermining of his political authority.

Only 32 percent of the income from Iraq's oil sales will accrue to the central government. The Kurds will take their share of $150 million, and a similar amount of the oil income will be allocated to UN operations. One-third will be deducted as war reparations for Iraq's attack on Kuwait.

In any case, the central government will be responsible for distribution of the remainder of the income. Madeleine Albright, the Washington spokesman, claimed that the United States will not permit Iraq to use the income accruing to it from the agreement illegally. However, the fact is that Saddam's hands are free to cheat in its expenditure.

A large part of this limited income will be expended for the strengthening and consolidation of the levers of pressure. The tyrant will use it as an escape route for his salvation, while the tyrannized people will be forced to struggle for their daily bread. Those who have remained loyal to Saddam will be elevated in rank, while for those who opposed him — especially the Shiites who have a past record of rising up against him — the situation will not change. In contrast to the Kurds, they do not have the shield of support from the allies and the United Nations. This is because they do not have any political benefits for the powers. Saddam has constantly used international pressures to wreak havoc on the heads of the oppressed Iraqi people, and the Shiites have been more suppressed than all others.

On the contrary, for the United States, the implementation of Resolution 986 has wrested the pretext from the hands of those who would lessen or lift the sanctions against Iraq, at least in the short term. Turkey is suffering from a domestic crisis, but will benefit the most from the agreement. This is because the major part of the oil exported will pass through Turkey's oil pipelines.

On the other hand, the White House will be able to sacrifice the ostensibly humanitarian veneer of the agreement for its larger interests whenever its political expediencies necessitate it. If these interests are not ensured, it is possible that the implementation of the

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agreement will be halted on some pretext, such as Saddam's misappropriation.

Once again, the United States will implement its double-sided policy, this time on a more extensive scale with the containment of Saddam and by silencing the proponents of a complete lifting of the embargo. Thus, the aim is containment of Saddam, not toppling him — contrary to the White House's claims — so that every time U.S. interests are to be ensured in this complex situation, the second step will be taken. This is despite the fact that this policy may constantly be threatened by the possibility of the increase in the scope of Iraq's freedom of action and by governments which desire its re-acceptance in international balances.

Iran: Nakhichevan Majles Speaker Talks With Foreign Minister

LD0506122496 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 5 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Mr. Vasif Talibov, chairman of Nakhichevan's Majles, today met Foreign Affairs Minister Velayati and expressed gratitude for the Islamic Republic of Iran's political and moral support for the Azerbaijan Republic.

Bilateral cooperation was also discussed during this meeting and the two sides expressed satisfaction at the growing trend of bilateral cooperation, based on common religious, cultural and historial heritage.

The chairman of Nakhichevan's Majles referred to the difficult times experienced in the past by Azerbaijan in general and Nakhichevan in particular. He said the Islamic Republic of Iran had exerted effective efforts to resolve the problems of Azerbaijan.

Mr. Talibov added: The people of Nakhichevan are profoundly interested in Iran and the Iranian nation.

He also described how the people of Nakhichevan had benefitted from the customs facilities provided by the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. Velayati referred to the support of the Islamic Republic of Iran for Azerbaijan under the difficult conditions of internal instability and stressed Iran's intention to continue this policy and prepare the grounds for greater economic and commercial cooperation.

Iran: Paper Assails Saudi Policies

LD0406192596 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 30 May 96 p 11

[Commentary by Esma'il Alavi: "The Saudi Regime, the Arm of U.S. Foreign Policy in the Region"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The end of U.S. influence in Iran provided an opportunity for the Saudi rulers to seek the vacant position of the local gendarme. In order to win U.S. trust and to prove that it deserves this role, the regime has had to put up with countless instances of humiliation. However, despite serving the West for a number of years, the Saudi rulers have not yet succeeded in assuming the role they so desperately covet. The future does not promise anything in this respect either.

The Saudis are finding it quite hard to assume a superior position in the region. The biggest obstacle against them is their Wahhabi sect. That is, the strict and narrow-minded views of the doctrine have pushed the Saudis into a quagmire of blind prejudice against other Islamic sects. Thanks to the inflexibility of their doctrine, the Saudi statesmen have lost many golden opportunities, and their strategic cooperation with the United States has not realized all they were dreaming of after the ending of U.S. influence in Iran. Nevertheless, the U.S. government uses Saudi Arabia as an extended arm to implement its foreign policies in the region. The Saudi regime provides the opportunity for the United States to crush every national and liberating movement in the region.

The Saudis' political performance in the regional crises, including the massacre of the defenseless Pakistani Muslims, the creation of a grouplet named Taleban, and the assassination of Islamic scholars, proves the point that the Saudis are incapable of assuming a positive role in the region. They just exploit various opportunities to unleash the grudge they bear against other Islamic sects.

It seems as if the U.S. statesmen have realized that their strategic cooperation with the Saudi government may, in the short term, open the way for the full domination of the arrogance, but ultimately cooperation with a reactionary regime with such fanatical views would deliver a crushing blow to their vestige of prestige in the region.

At present, however, the U.S. government is pursuing a policy of limited hegemony in the region. In line with this policy they exploit the blind prejudice of the Sa'ud family to crush the anti-colonial movements in the area. The Saudis, in turn, remain subservient to the United States; and thanks to the petro-dollars, feel free to continue their divisive policies.

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The fact that today the Pakistani Muslims kill one another without any clear justification, or if we see that peace and tranquillity elude hapless Afghanistan — despite its victory against the eastern arrogance — and the fact that the oppressed people of Bahrain are crushed, these are all the results of the vindictive and divisive policies pursued by the Saudis.

Iran: Paper Regrets Likud Victory in Israeli Polls

LD0406192796 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 1 Jun 96 pp 2, 15

[Article: "Likud Cometh — End of the Peace Process"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Israeli right-wing leader Benjamin Netanyahu won Israel's first direct election for prime minister on Friday [31 May].

The Likud Party's election platform emphasized on three issues: Refusal to consider territorial concessions, refusal to recognize an independent Palestinian state, and stepping up Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank.

According to the Oslo 2 agreement, signed between the Labour government and Yasir Arafat's PLO in September 1995, Israel was to withdraw from four-fifths of the occupied city of Al-Khalil (Hebron) by 28 March. Prime Minister Peres delayed the pullback on the pretext of security concerns.

Netanyahu will resort to the question of security of some 400 militant Jewish settlers living among the 120,000 Palestinian residents of the town to cancel withdrawal of Israeli forces from the city. At best he will go for a more comprehensive package and resort to procrastination.

The problem with the question of Al-Khalil is that key figures in the Likud Party and some of its allies are deadly opposed to the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the occupied town. Ariel Sharon, leader of a hardline nationalist faction in the Likud Party has said that the Likud government should renege on its obligation under Oslo to hand most of the volatile West Bank town of Hebron over to 'Arafat's Palestinian Authority.

As Faruq Kaddumi, the head of the PLO's Political Department has said, "The victory of extremists confirms that the idea of peace has not yet matured in an Israeli society still dominated by ideas of colonization and confiscation of land." 'Arafat's information minister, Yasir 'Abed Rabbo, said yesterday the election results were "a serious sign that the peace process will be dangerously threatened.... This requires a global re-evaluation of the situation for the Palestinians and the Arabs."

Since Netanyahu will be the first directly elected prime minister of the Zionist regime, he can really shake Israeli foreign policy if he chooses to. He has not been even a minister earlier. Hence, he can bury the peace process.

Although 'Arafat and his colleagues did not gain any tangible victory while dealing with the Labour Party, if Netanyahu holds fast to the Likud Party's election platform, the peace process will be strongly blocked. Probably 'Arafat and his colleagues will then realize that they have really sold out the Palestinian cause to Israel, keeping the Palestinians the prisoners of the Zionist regime.

The best solution to the crisis in the Middle East is implementation of the UN resolutions calling for unconditional withdrawal of Israeli forces from the occupied territories.

Iran: Turkey Limits Fruits, Other Imports

96LA0211A Tehran KEYHAN-E HAVA'I in Persian 17 Apr 96 p 2

[FBIS Translated Text] **Tehran, KEYHAN-E HAVA'I NEWS DIVISION, 25 Farvardin, 13 April—While the people of eastern Turkey prefer Iranian agricultural products to the products of their own country because of the high quality and suitable price, the government of Turkey will implement new restrictions on Iranian imports, including watermelons.**

According to a report by ANATOLIY NEWS AGENCY, Khaled Daghli, the Turkish advisory minister, who was visiting Adana province, made this announcement in a meeting with orchard owners and claimed that the entry of fresh watermelon from Iran through the border trade has disrupted the domestic market of Turkey and caused losses for some domestic producers.

Referring to last year's regulations in Turkey to prevent the import of agricultural products from Iran and neighboring countries, he said: The government of Turkey has taken some initiatives this year as well to prevent the entry of fresh watermelons (mainly from Iran).

In the warm regions in southern Iran, watermelons grow two months before they do in Turkey and through border trade capture most of the Turkish markets.

Even after Turkish watermelons come to the market, the people of that country, especially in the eastern region, are more inclined to buy the Iranian product.

Last year, when Iranian agricultural products, particularly watermelons, were welcomed by the people of Turkey in its different markets, the government of Turkey immediately tried to prepare regulations to prevent the entry of fresh fruits and vegetables from Iran.

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Prevention of the entry of agricultural products from Iran by Turkey is contrary to the principles of an open economy, which Turkey claims to have.

Iran: Nateq-Nuri Reelected Majles Speaker

LD0506170996 Tehran IRNA in English 1657 GMT 5 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, June 5, IRNA — In its Wednesday's [5 June] session the new Iranian Majles (parliament), elected Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri as speaker for one year, with 146 out of 240 votes cast in his favour. Hoj. Nateq-Nuri had served a full-four year term as speaker of the last Majles.

In Wednesday's vote at the Majles, vice-speakers of the last Majles, Hasan Rowhani and 'Ali Movahedi Kermani, retained their posts for another year by securing 209 and 133 votes respectively.

The 270-seat Majles also approved the credentials of 241 deputies, including five minority ones, for the new four-year term, and referred the cases of six deputies to the investigation commission for further deliberation.

Iran: Editorial Views Competition for Majles Posts

LD0406190396 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 1 Jun 96 pp 2, 15

[Editorial: "Hectic Activities for Post of Speaker of New Majles"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Fifth Majles will begin its first session at eight o'clock today. The 241 MPs who have been elected to the Majles along with high-ranking officials as well as top brass officers will listen to the message of the leader of Islamic revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i, and the speech of President [Akbar] Hashemi-Rafsanjani.

According to the Constitution, the most senior member of the Majles will be appointed as its provisional president until a provisional Speaker a Presidential Board are elected. [sentence as received]

There will be hot discussions and challenges and counter-challenges among various groups for the post of the Speaker and the Presidential Board of the Majles when the senior president of the Majles hands over the Majles to the MPs to elect the speaker and Presidential Board. Though the Presidential Board will not be elected till the credentials of two-thirds of the Majles MPs are finalized, the provisional Presidential Board supervises the election of the speaker and Presidential Board. The combination of the provisional Presidential Board will play a critical role in determining the members of the Presidential Board.

Jame'eh-ye Ruhaniyat-e Mobarez (JRM) [the Militant Clergy Association] has nominated 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri for the post of speaker, and Hasan Ruhani and Mohsen Mojtahed-Shabestari for vice-speakers respectively.

The rival group, Kargozaran-e Sazandegi [Servants of Construction], has nominated Abdollah Nuri for the post of speaker while it has nominated Hasan Ruhani and 'Abolqasem Sarhaddizadeh for the first and second vice-speakers. The Association for Defending the Values of the Islamic Revolution (ADVIR) has nominated 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri for the post of speaker and Abdollah Nuri and Hasan Ruhani for the first and second vice-speakers. The coalition of Imam's Line supports Abdollah Nuri for the post of speaker but has not thus far announced its nominees for the post of vice-speakers.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Reyshahri, in his private parleys with the leaders of the two competing groups, has failed to convince them to compromise on sharing the post of speaker for Nateq-Nuri and vice-speaker for Abdollah Nuri. This indicates that there will be hot discussions for electing the Presidential Board during the first few days of the Fifth Majles, for, Abdollah Nuri will not stand for the post of vice-speaker in case he fails to get the post of speaker. Moreover, the JRM has not agreed to accept Abdollah Nuri as vice- speaker in case it wins the post of speaker. Hence, the first days' discussions will focus on the election of the speaker.

Although Kargozaran-e Sazandegi has announced that 145 MPs attended its meeting of 23rd May, neutral sources believe that only between 80 to 90 MPs attended the meeting. If this is the case, Kargozaran will form a minority in the Majles. The combined number of the MPs of the JRM and the ADVIR will be more than that of the Kargozaran-e Sazandegi.

It is, therefore, likely that Kargozaran-e Sazandegi compromise with the JRM on accepting the post of vice-speaker for Abdollah Nuri and speaker for [Nateq] Nuri.

However, the claims and counter-claims will be proved during the first few days of the fifth Majles. What is important for the nation and its expectations of the MPs is their commitment to the letter and spirit of their oath of office: "Protecting the perimeter of Islam and safeguarding the achievements of the Islamic revolution...."

Hope, the MPs will materialize the nation's aspirations by determining to remain committed to the ideals of the Islamic revolution throughout their membership to the parliament. [sentence as received]

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Iran: Majles Approves Credentials of 180 Deputies

LD0506111796 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 5 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In an open session today, the Islamic Consultative Assembly [Majles] began reviewing the credentials of people's representatives in the fifth Majles.

In this session, which was chaired by the provisional Majles speaker 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri, in line with the implementation of Article 14 of the Majles internal rules and regulations, 15 election branches submitted their reports concerning the credentials of Majles deputies. Subsequently, the credentials of 180 deputies were approved, while — due to the presence of some objections — the credentials of deputies from Ali-Gudarz and Sanandaj constituencies were referred to the investigation committee.

According to a Central News Unit report, debate on reports by the remaining branches and also the election of permanent members of the Majles presidium will continue in the rest of the session, which is to resume at 1430 today.

Iran: New Appointments Announced

96LA0211E Tehran KEYHAN-E HAVA'I in Persian 1 May 96 p 4

[FBIS Translated Text] 'Ali Akbar Rahmani, the deputy minister of interior and head of the Personal Records Organization, appointed Hadi Rahmati as the legal and birth certificate deputy, 'Ali Reza Mahuzi as the director general of legal and birth certificate affairs, 'Abbas Najipur as the director general of personal records for foreign affairs, and Seyyed 'Ali Musavi as the director general for legal and birth certificate research and methods of this organization.

In a decree issued by Engineer Torkan, the minister of roads and transport, 'Ali 'Abedzadeh was appointed for another three years as the chairman of the board of directors and general manager of Aseman Air Services Company.

Iran: Deputies Reflect on Evading Duties

96LA0211D Tehran KEYHAN-E HAVA'I in Persian 24 Apr 96 p 18

[FBIS Translated Text] Sometimes, some of the deputies, because of material interests or concern about the future of their personal matters, engage in other work which compromises their duties as deputies and their commitment to the nation.

Enumerating the duties of deputies during the term of legislation, he emphasized: The duty of a deputy is to spend his time in the Majles, devise the best laws, and design the path for the movement of the society. A deputy must be active in the committees, have overall knowledge of the proposals and plans, and, after studying and examining the laws, express his opinions. In fact, the person who becomes a deputy must devote himself compassionately and sincerely to the regime and not deviate from this framework.

He agrees to the reporting of the actions of the deputies to the nation by the Majles in order that at the end of every term the people will know of and be able to evaluate the actions of those elected by the nation and, through proper evaluation, be able to engage in better selections in electing deputies.

[Begin box]

Dr. 'Abbas'ali Zali, the chairman of the Planning and Budget Committee: The duties of the deputies have not been explained to the people yet. [end box]

In this connection, Dr. 'Abbas'ali Zali, the chairman of the Planning and Budget Committee, said: The payment of election campaign expenditures by opportunists and capitalists is one of the deviant situations that will put the deputy in a tight spot in the future, in order to repay their debt.

He considers patronizing between the deputies and the ministers to be rare in the Islamic Republic but points out that the consequences of this action will have many dangers, the least of which is for the deputy to lose his critical judgment.

The deputy from Karaj in the Majles said: The duties of a deputy have not yet been explained to the people properly, who may think that offering public services and developmental work in the constituent area are the responsibilities of the deputy whom they have sent to the Majles.

In continuation, he added: During the campaign and election, candidates give promises to the people and must act on them. By coming to the Majles, they spend their time on the problems of the constituency. Such people are obliged to somehow get along with the officials of the executive organizations in order to be able to take steps in meeting the promises. Such a deputy's tongue will be tied before an official, and he will be unable to oversee the actions of a minister or ministers, as he should.

Mohammad Hadi 'Abd-e Khoda'i, the chairman of the Culture and Higher Education Committee, in response to the question of KEYHAN-E HAVA'I, stated that the main reason is lack of attention to the grave responsibilities of the deputies by the clients and deputies and

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said: We must note that the work of the Majles concerns the whole country, both in connection with legislation and in connection with overseeing the proper implementation of the laws. The deputy from Mashhad added: The Majles must, by devising laws, solve the problems of the whole society rather than writing personal letters to solve the problems of individuals. For instance, to investigate administrative complaints, he introduces the law and the Administrative Justice Court. With the establishment of that court, anyone who has an administrative problem may go to it, and the court, through its extensive organizations, can investigate the problem and issue a just ruling. This was an essential task that the Majles undertook.

Now, if everyone, without going to the court, goes to the deputy as soon as he encounters a problem, on the one hand, he is trying to use connections and, on the other, the time of the deputy will be spent on personal problems, and he will be unable to attend to the essential work of the courts, including studying the proposals and bills and properly supervising over the current affairs of the country. The tragedy does not end here. A Majles that should have 270 independent, capable, and prolific opinions in connection with the whole country, because deputies spend time uselessly, becomes a Majles in which only a few people turn the wheels, and the rest spend their time on minor affairs. Of course, the people must establish contact with their deputies without expecting the deputies to attend to the job-related tasks and minor affairs of each individual. In this case, the Majles itself and mass media should inform the people fully about the duties of deputies. The Majles has a committee that is known as the Article 90 Committee. This committee is the final authority for investigating all the complaints from the three branches, even the Majles itself.

Also, the government offices must think about solving people's problems rather than creating obstacles or wasting time, and the deputy, up to the point that the people are forced to tell their deputies about their problems. [sentence as published]

Iran: Army Chief on Maneuvers, Programs

NC0506124396 Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian 23 May 96 p 7

[Interview with General 'Ali Shahbazi, chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, by unidentified ETTELA'AT correspondent on 23 May in Tehran]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Passage omitted]

[ETTELA'AT] Under the current circumstances, when we are faced with a variety of plots by the enemies of Islam, how can we learn from our experiences?

[Shahbazi] The gains of eight years of holy defense [Iran-Iraq war], with their many inspiring operations — even though there were losses and casualties — were a lesson to the enemies of the Islamic Republic of Iran that our aspirations, interests, and objectives should not be subject to their avarice. This in itself would prove a strong deterrent weapon for the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Similarly, the vast store of experiences and extensive training that the war endowed us with familiarized us with our strong points, capabilities, national elements of strength, and the way to use them optimally. In addition, the problems, shortcomings, and vulnerabilities of our units were also revealed. One of these, which became apparent right at the outset of the enemy's aggression, was our lack of self-sufficiency and our need for foreign equipment. Hence, during the course of the imposed [Iran-Iraq] war, and even now when our forces are no longer engaged in combat, special attention is being paid to the aforementioned factors in order to eliminate our shortcomings and boost our strong points with maximum efforts. Praise be to God, the armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran have, with the succor of God Almighty, been able to take basic and important steps in the fields of organization and training on equipment, in order to emphasize the need for severing dependence on the outside world.

From these efforts, we have achieved a massive repository of scientific, financial, and national gains. These experiences have been applied at various levels with training centers including long term, short term, and preliminary courses, as well as higher education courses at the command headquarters and academies. At the strategic studies universities, the degrees, regulations, and training and combat curricula have been changed accordingly.

[ETTELA'AT] Some time ago, in its support for the Zionist regime, the United States threatened to use nuclear weapons against countries opposing the United States. Could you please tell us how serious is this threat, and on principle, why the United States makes such threats?

[Shahbazi] The factors for the preservation of the United States and Israel have become intertwined, and one of the U.S.' fundamental objectives is to preserve Israel. Therefore, in order to attain this objective, it does not spare any effort, threat, plot, deceit, and fraud.

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The United States does not implement any security, political, economic, social, or cultural plan in the region except for the protection, consolidation, and empowerment of Israel. On the other hand, the Zionists have infiltrated the U.S. political and administrative system and play decisive and key roles, so the adoption and articulation of such decisions and policies is not unexpected.

The threat of the use of nuclear weapons by the U.S. echelons pertains to its past. In the 1973 Arab-Israeli war and in the Vietnam war, the United States used the same ploy. However, the conditions in the world today are different from those of the past, and so these threats cannot be effective in any regional dispute. This is because implementing them would immeasurably damage U.S. credibility and prestige. When respect for humanity and the stigma of such reprehensible acts is removed, as a consequence, one cannot say that other countries with nuclear power, such as Russia, the PRC, France, etc., would not use their nuclear weapons in certain circumstances to ensure their interests and impose their will on others. As a result, a horrifying holocaust would threaten the very existence of humanity.

It is precisely for this reason that even after half a century since the atomic bombing of Japan, the U.S. president has been forced to apologize to Japan officially, the report of which was disseminated in the international media.

[ETTELA'AT] Some of the Zionist regime's leaders have declared that Iran is seeking nuclear weapons. Subsequently, they stated that they would launch an aerial attack on Iran's nuclear installations. However, after a while Peres said this would be irrational. What do you think the reason was for such a change of stance?

[Shahbazi] Due to the conflict of values and ideology, the United States and Israel consider the Islamic Republic of Iran their biggest, most intransigent, and irreconcilable enemy. Therefore, they try to ascribe every report and rumor that can cause misunderstanding — regardless of whether there is any veracity in it — to Iran and magnifying it. Then they embark on unrealistic analysis and on the basis of their fallacious and spiteful conclusions, they make decisions and express their opinions.

The announcement on Iran's efforts to gain nuclear weapons is not a new one on the part of Israel. In fact, it has a longstanding precedent and has been used on several occasions in false propaganda in the international media, undermining Iran's humanitarian stances and positions.

An attack against Iran's nuclear installations has been bandied around — without any of the requisite deliberation on the matter — to intimidate the Islamic Republic of Iran. All countries, especially the United States and Israel, are aware that such installations and armaments do not exist in Iran.

Here, it is necessary to assert that we do not have any need for nuclear weapons, as this would be in contravention of the Islamic Republic of Iran's defense strategy. Those countries that would seek access to nuclear weapons are aggressors. We have frequently reiterated in political and defense strategy that our armed forces are defensive forces and we aspire for peace in the region. Israel is the nuclear power, with more than 200 nuclear warheads, that threatens the Middle east region with its expansionist and aggressive strategy. Israel and its supporters know full well that Iran's situation is very different from that of other countries and the noble Iranian nation, its men and women, the old and the young, are armed with something much stronger than an atomic bomb, and that is the divine, humane, and pure Islam of Muhammad, peace be upon him, which has dawned like the sun in Iran after 1400 years. They believe that as God Almighty has said: "Fain would they extinguish God's lights with their mouths, but God will not allow but that his light should be perfected, even though the unbelievers may detest it." [Koranic verse]

Our people always consider themselves victorious in all arenas, as they believe that in combating their abject enemy, whether they kill or be killed, they are victorious. They will not let any action go unanswered, therefore the recent views aired by the enemies on a bombing being irrational stems from this. Still they serve their interests by making such repeated allegations.

[ETTELA'AT] What program does the Islamic Republic of Iran have for strengthening its military and defense structure?

[Shahbazi] A military system does not exist by itself. It is an integral part of the social structure of a nation. Military strength is one of factors that contribute to the strength of power and in crisis conditions all the factors of the power of a nation, such as the cultural, political, economic, geographical, and psychological, are backed by military power.

Military power is the glorious manifestation of a nation's strength and this is precisely what gave Iran predominance over the enemy in the eight years of Holy Defense and prevented the enemy from attaining his aspirations. On the other hand, our military and defense structure, or the combat capability of our tactical units, is comprised of moral and material factors that have been attained with the help of God Almighty; the precise

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implementation of the guidance of the great commander in chief of the armed forces; the optimum utilization of the country's indigenous resources; and the implementation of eight years' experience gained from our Holy Defense.

With regard to upgrading the level and scale of the aforementioned factors, astounding measures have been implemented and, Praise be to God, wonderful results have been achieved.

The heroic ground forces have planned dozens of projects and put them on the production line, including the first main battle tank, the armored personnel carrier, and the tank carrier.

The victorious and innovative air force and army have manufactured tactical and light training airplanes. They have also carried out basic repairs in all the aircraft and have produced various air-to-air, surface-to-air, air-to-surface missiles, as well as the system for aerial refueling in modern eastern aircraft. Other extremely important projects have been planned, completed, or are in the process of being completed.

The navy of our armed forces has produced various light frigates and renovated different kinds of equipment. They have made fruitful endeavors for attaining self-sufficiency and severing foreign dependence. All these measures are aimed at acquiring increased capability and strengthening the armed forces structure.

In all these measures, our perspective is to move toward attaining self-sufficiency and severing all dependence. Praise be to God, we have made many valuable and fundamental strides in this field and due to divine strength and fortitude, we have attained self-sufficiency in producing all our needed conventional weapons and ammunition, and we do not have any need for foreigners (Praise be to God).

[ETTELA'AT] What joint military programs of the Iranian armed forces and its neighbors have been envisioned for the year 1375 [year beginning 21 March 1996]?

[Shahbazi] We are friendly with our neighbors and Muslims. In order to strengthen the defense structure of Islamic countries, we have also embarked on joint maneuvers. In 1374 [year beginning 21 March 1995] we staged joint naval maneuvers with the Pakistani armed forces, called IRPAK-74, in the vicinity of Karachi and the results were extremely satisfactory. This year we intend to hold IRPAK-75 maneuvers in collaboration with the Pakistani armed forces in the waters of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

A visit to the ports of the Muslim friendly country of Oman is being planned and is scheduled to take place shortly. Similar programs with other countries are currently being studied.

[ETTELA'AT] What were the characteristic features of the maneuvers that are currently in progress?

[Shahbazi] These maneuvers are the most extensive in the region, in the years before and after the victory of the magnificent Islamic Revolution. They will be staged with the participation of the main units of four armored divisions, seven infantry divisions, and six permanent commando and airborne brigades, four artillery regiments, one combat engineering group, and one air defense group, as well as all the combat and military support units and services, the air borne and vast support divisions of the air force of the Islamic Republic of Iran's armed forces, with their eight years of service of Holy Defense, God willing. These will be unique maneuvers.

In these maneuvers, hundreds of kinds of advanced armaments including tanks, personnel carriers, heavy artillery and mortar launchers, and scores of airplanes and helicopters will take part. However, contrary to the practice in maneuvers of other countries, all the equipment as well as the cartridges used will be real, as in war.

Nearly 200,000 personnel of the Islamic Republic of Iran's armed forces, including the air and ground forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, will participate. It may be worth noting that these maneuvers were planned and implemented in the shortest possible time.

The following are distinctive characteristics of the maneuvers:

1. The speed with which the participating forces were gathered from the various parts of the country to the maneuver site and the practice carried out for rapid deployment in the event of any threat.
2. Display of capabilities in repair of equipment damaged during the Holy Defense.
3. The close coordination and cooperation between the air and ground forces, especially in providing close air support.
4. The alighting of parachutists and the jettisoning of cargo on an extensive scale for boosting the self-confidence of the special military units.
5. The utilization of the experiences gleaned in eight years of Holy Defense and of advanced air defense systems in the maneuvers.
6. Utility of new tactics and techniques used in electronic and anti-electronic warfare.

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7. Utilization of tactics to combat the use of chemical weapons.
8. Fullscale firing from air and ground weapons in support of the units in the maneuvers.
9. Cooperation and coordination on an extensive scale among the combat and support units and combat support services.
10. The transfer of expertise from officers and sergeants, which they gleaned in the years of their successful fighting on the fronts of Truth versus Falsehood [Iran-Iraq war], to the younger generation of the armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

It is worth mentioning that the Islamic Republic of Iran's strategy is defensive in principle, and not based on offense. The three branches of the Iranian armed forces have been organized on this basis and have a high level of defense capability. This is while most of the countries of the world allocate greater importance to offensive strategies rather than to defensive.

The reason is that the powers of world arrogance, spearheaded by the United States, project us as a aggressive power and as a threat to the regional countries, which is quite contrary to the truth. This is done to inspire fear and intimidation in the neighboring countries, in order to make them more dependent. The role of the powers of world arrogance in depicting Iran as dangerous and in propounding these unrealistic threats are all aimed at boosting their sales of armaments — which are piling up in the American warehouses — to the region.

By doing so, they make the regional atmosphere more tense so that they can continuously capitalize on it for their benefit. At times, they raise the issue of Iran's nuclear program in order to attain their lowly objectives. Iran is an Islamic country, which is based on life-giving Islamic injunctions and is administered under the aegis of the great leaders of the Velayat-e Faqih [rule by the supreme jurisconsult]. In view of the fact that we consider all weapons of mass destruction, chemical and nuclear, as opposed to the humane ideology of Islam, we have never sought to acquire them and we do not need them.

Iran: TEHRAN TIMES Says Velayat Military Exercises No Threat

LD0406185996 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 30 May 96 p1

[Unattributed editorial entitled: "Velayat Maneuver Poses No Threat to Region"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran Times Service, Tehran — Commanders of the grand Velayat war games participating in a press conference here on Wednesday [29 May] outlined the characteristics and the achievements of the maneuvers recently carried out by about 200,000 Iranian troops in Kushk-e Nosrat region, near the central city of Qom.

Commander of the Ground Forces, Major General Ahmad Dadbin, who is also the commander of the maneuvers, Brigadier Generals Karim Ebadat, Hoseyn Dadrass, and Rahim Ebrahimi briefed the press on different aspects of the exercises.

Pursuant to an order by the leader of the Islamic revolution, who was present in the field, ten divisions of the Ground Forces moved toward Kushk-e Nosrat and achieved the predetermined targets, Dadbin said.

Commitment of the forces to the leader, Ayatollah Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i, enabled them to complete the exercise better and sooner than what was projected, he added.

Rapid deployment of troops and equipments, artillery transportation and the coordination among different units participating in the war games were among other characteristics of the exercises, the commander of the Velayat maneuver headquarters outlined.

The games provided the Iranian troops with an opportunity to examine Iranian-made military equipment, and the military officials with opportunity to evaluate their personnel and different offensive and defensive strategies.

Close cooperation among Air Force, armoured, artillery, infantry, engineering and telecommunications units was one of the most outstanding achievements of the two-day military exercise.

He said according to the estimations, it would take three months to station six divisions in the battlefield but the participating personnel managed to deploy 10 divisions in the region within two weeks.

It points up the fact that the Islamic Republic Armed Forces are always ready to repel any aggression, the commander stressed.

Asked if any similar military exercises were performed in the world, Dadbin said no similar maneuver in the world has so far been carried out given the massive extent of the Velayat war games.

Supplying the participating forces with the essential needs, the logistics department also dug four water wells providing the troops with water for drinking and washing.

The Iranian-made Zolfaqar tank passed the tests successfully during the war games, he said.

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The Kobra personnel carrier, artillery and missiles manufactured by the Defence Industries Organization were also tested in the exercise, he said, calling the tests as satisfactory.

There were no serious casualties on the part of the forces, Dadbin said, adding only two car accidents happened during the exercises, one within and the other without the operation field.

The airborne units which began operation from Shiraz managed to station in the field in less than two hours and after fulfilling the mission returned to their bases in Shiraz, Dadbin said referring to the units as "rapid reaction forces."

Strictly denying the allegations recently launched by certain news media, which described the exercise as a threat to Iran's neighboring states, he said the maneuver was just a power show-off to our enemies and was to test readiness and alertness of the Islamic Republic Army.

Maj-Gen Dadbin stressed that due to the grand leader's attendance in the operation field, the final stage of the exercise was performed excellently.

Iran: Lack of Projects for Youth Deplored

96LA0211C Tehran KEYHAN-E HAVA'I in Persian 24 Apr 96 p 8

[Editorial by Hasan Bolkhari of the KEYHAN-E HAVA'I Cultural Division]

[FBIS Translated Text] Youths and children make up 75 percent of the population of our country. Hence, Iran is one of the youngest countries in the world, in which three-fourths of the population are between the ages of 1 and 30 years old, a large population of whom are at the beginning of the process of the formation of their personalities, ideas, and beliefs, a generation that is learning from its guardians (at home and in the society) how to think tomorrow, how to behave, what to respect and value, and from what to turn away and avoid. Regarding the sensitivity and importance of dealing in the affairs of the young and the youth, it is sufficient to say that any nation that is negligent and disregards this issue will lose give away its future and has lost. Those societies that have been successful in advancing their goals and wishes are those which have realized the very sensitive, vital, and destiny-making place of the young in the process of events and the shaping of their future, and through overall planning and careful studies have engaged in clarifying and explaining the general values and principles that govern the culture of the society. The young are the face and nature of the future. A nation that wants its young people to have a successful and acceptable future is obliged to exert a great deal of effort in their education.

Because of their sensitive age, the young are like a clean slate and their minds and hearts constantly require knowledge and experience to add to what they have learned. The young are always looking for new concepts and hungry for new ideas and thoughts. Woe be it to the nation that does not take the necessary advantage of this young learning force and does not strive to clarify its values, principles, ideas, and beliefs for the young.

Lack of attention to the young will have irreparable consequences, especially if "cultural invasion," with its very conscientious programs, follows its theoretical task of injecting and imposing deviant ideas and keeping the young away from their own authentic source of beliefs and ideas.

The passage of time will necessarily take the new generation, willingly or unwillingly, from the authentic ideological and revolutionary culture, and this separation can also be spiritual as well as physical, if the officials and those in charge do not try to feed and engross the minds and ideas of the young. Undoubtedly, if we do not try to clarify the values and ideas, we will be nurturing a potential force of opposition, a force that because of its ignorance of the principles becomes the propagator and the mirror of ideas and behavior that have no roots in our culture, and if it does not result in conflict, its will result in influence over the young generation, the danger of which will certainly be no less than the danger of that opposition.

The "Supreme Youth Council" is an institution that is responsible for planning, guiding, and studying the affairs and currents of the young generation in this country, but what percentage of our young people even know of the existence of such an institution, let alone about its programs and plans? Almost none of the young people in the country know what the programs of this council are and what activities it pursues. Sometimes there is an interview and a report is presented, but once again there is silence later. What is the reason? Placing three-fourths of the population of this country under the coverage of its specific programs must be one of the most fundamental current affairs of this country. Hence, this task requires experienced and skilled experts who through the guidance of all the organizations and ministries in connection with the young generation and the youths to plan and promote ideas and establish continuous and constant relations with them and the values and principles that govern the religious and revolutionary culture of the society.

Mr. Nateq-Nuri, the speaker of the Majles, in a gathering of the officials of the cultural-artistic centers of the

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mosques of Tehran Province, criticized the indifference of the young to the Islamic and revolutionary principles and values. Of course, this is a ray of hope, that the officials have realized that in the chaotic market of the entry of various cultures, the young must be rescued through various tools, but which is the responsible institution? What are the practical programs? What joint gatherings or assemblies have been held by the Ministry of Culture and Higher Education, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Islamic Guidance and Culture, the Islamic Propaganda Organization, the Voice and Vision of the Republic of Iran, and other organizations in order to respond to the questions: How we should address the young generation? How should the values be propagated? How should we respond to the needs of the youth and guide them? If the officials think about these issues, we may be able to reduce the indifference of the young generation and fill the gaps.

The Majles elections were among the important instances that showed the very sensitive place of the young and also the necessity of explaining, increasing information, and making them aware. What appears in the elections is the presence of various and varied ideas, thoughts, and preferences. If the young generation does not know its duty and responsibilities in this arena, what will be the result? The result will be one of two things: either their aimlessly being the target of all sorts of opinions, and because they cannot make a choice, acting under the influence of the currents or passing the issue by indifferently. How can we measure the damage of this indifference?

Iran: Paper Discusses Tensions Caused by Hezbollah

LD0406224296 Tehran ASR-E MA in Persian 29 May 96 p 1

[Unattributed article: "Tension, Violence, and Insult Don't Fit Hezbollah's Profile"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] It is some time since a new round of political-cultural activities by groups such as Ansar-e Hezbollah [supporters of Hezbollah] opened in Tehran and in some other major cities.

The activities, originally, were cultural in nature and aimed at protesting against the organizing of speeches in universities, holding seminars on history, and adopting a number of cultural policies.

The activities were also directed at opposing a number of Western cultural manifestations, ranging from dress code to commercial and urban gathering centers, by inviting people to participate in the gatherings of hezbollahis.

Some of the leaders and the organizers of the protest gatherings were trying to portray them as being free from factional and group tendencies. They wanted to mobilize the idealistic feelings and tendencies of the Muslim and hezbollahi people in society toward opposing the process of undermining Islamic and revolutionary values.

When the elections began for the fifth term of the Islamic Majles, the political emergence of these movements became stronger. It was especially during the second round of the Majles elections that the group and its spokesmen intensified their opposition against rival groups of the bazaar faction and made their support and backing for the above faction more obvious and clear.

As the group's actions become more politically orientated, the form and method of Ansar-e Hezbollah's protest and opposition against individuals and factions and even their criticism of the problems became sharper and more acute.

Examples of the emergence of the new situation can be seen in the protests made against a number of campaign speeches during the elections and against the method of writing slogans on walls and doors, as well as issues raised in the speeches made by their speakers and issues published in some publications affiliated to them. Other examples are the armed protest gathering held in front of IRNA, the gathering in front of SALAM's office, and the attack on the Qods Cinema, as well as, their gathering in front of Amir Kabir Industrial College and the statements and slogans issued against the Islamic society of the college.

The severity of these approaches' unity, which in fact has placed society and the Muslim and hezbollahi forces on the brink of new tensions, has forced us to remind people once again of the risky prospect of continuing such actions. We invite the revolutionary and Muslim forces to think about the situation.

Our advice to those brothers and sisters who, because of their belief are protesting at certain cultural disorders, is that they should not only try to find the roots for the emergence of this unfavorable situation, but should think about the results and effects of the methods that were recently implemented.

We discuss a number of issues and questions in order to make clear the dimensions of the issue for those who intend to defend the revolution and Islam for the sake of their religious belief.

1. It is clear that the most important threat to the system and the Islamic society comes from "tensions and the creation of tensions." Tensions will not only involve domestic forces and wear them out, but will

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also divert our attention from fundamental domestic and international issues at a time when the region is faced with crises, and the world-devourer America and the usurper regime of Israel are carrying out calculated designs in Lebanon and Palestine, the Persian Gulf, Turkey, Afghanistan, and Central Asia and the Caucasus. [passage omitted]

2. Another threat posed by such confrontations is the creation of discord and the damaging of the Islamic and revolutionary unity of our society. [passage omitted]

3. No doubt, resorting to such methods will insult the system and damage the sanctity of valuable terms such as hezbollah and basij. Violating the legal boundaries of the system and the dignity of senior officials of the system will definitely open the door to the land of nowhere. There is no doubt that criticism is one of the blessings of this revolution and system, but there is a difference between criticism and negation. Why, first of all, instead of criticizing plans and policies, do we immediately resort to insults against the country's senior officials? Why do we not consider if there are any religious or legal bases for such insults? Second, whose interests do those insults serve? Third, does resorting to such methods have any outcome other than increasing the indifference and rejection of domestic forces?

4. The fact that the number of those taking part in such movements remains limited to dozens, and hundreds at the most, and the lack of public interest in them show that the public support for using such methods has drastically declined. Is it possible to accept that our Muslim and revolutionary people have become indifferent toward the principle of cultural irresponsibility, or that they have chosen to neglect their Islamic and revolutionary values and do not welcome such violent confrontations? [sentence as published] Naturally the answer to the first question is negative; the people have shown, in practice and through historical and political events, how they have maintained their presence on the scene. [passage omitted]

5. Another consequence of such tensions is the gradual rejection and elimination of thinkers and intellectuals and giving ground to the carefree, irresponsible, and possibly opportunist elements, particularly in scientific and university environments. [passage omitted]

6. One cannot simply overlook complex cultural issues. There is no doubt that our contemporary Islamic society is now facing the threat of infiltration by Western culture, or in general a culture characterized by the absence of moral and ethical codes, total apathy, lack of motivation, and all the other manifestations of consumerism and capitalism. However, has anyone ever set out to criticize the economic and social policies which have proved conducive to the creation of these cultural maladies? Why is there so much concern with the consequences rather than with the causes? Why is it that only individuals are subjected to criticism?

One only needs to look at the essence of the cultural policies formulated either by the Voice and Vision [Iran Radio and TV] or the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance. Was it not the case that changes in the management structure of these institutions led to an increase in unrestrained behavior in many areas, as well as to a tendency to succumb to certain trends prevalent in society? So why is it that the roots of these problems — which are embedded in the culture of capitalism and consumerism — are ignored to such an extent? How can one claim to be worried about the spread of cultural traits which result from rightist policies and then remain indifferent to the process of the hegemony of capitalism, vote for candidates favoring a market economy, and remain aloof from the growth of rightist tendencies? [passage omitted]

Naturally, after one recognizes the roots of the present problems, one can then set out to find suitable and rational methods of dealing with them. Threats, violence, scaremongering, and the neglect of legal channels are certainly not acceptable methods, especially when these are adopted in an Islamic system as a way of confronting other Muslim forces. These methods are unacceptable even if they are supposedly employed to confront cultural and social crises and bottlenecks.

7. Our last point is that in looking at these tensions, one should not ignore the influence of some individuals who pursue their own personal economic and political aspirations and objectives. In the arena of fighting the perverse consumerist culture, one must seek piety and ways of returning to the fundamentals. One cannot expect individuals, who for various reasons and for the fulfillment of their different material objectives constantly strive toward furthering their own specific economic and political interests, to remain outside these forums [as published]. Furthermore, one cannot expect them to stop their attempts to channel the beliefs and demands of the faithful and honest members of these forums into a discourse which will ultimately serve their own specific interests.

However, what is most important is that one should not allow certain opportunist elements, whose backgrounds both before and after the revolution are clear to everyone, to represent the "Hezbollah" people and exploit their pure sentiments. This is a serious warning which should be remembered by all those who participate in certain discourses purely because of their genuine affection for the revolution and Islam, but are sadly ignorant

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about the true nature of the deeds of individuals who claim to be their spokesmen.

Iran: Report Urges Acceleration of Natural Gas Industry

LD0406193696 Tehran IRAN NEWS in English 1 Jun 96 p 4

[Economic Report: "The Need for Acceleration of Natural Gas Projects"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] It is a well-known fact that natural gas is our cleanest fuel. It is clean-burning and has less environmental impact than any of the fossil fuels. It is not surprising, therefore, that the use of gas in Iran and worldwide has dramatically increased over the past several decades.

Natural gas is available in abundant quantities in the Middle East. Within the Middle East, Iran possesses the largest reserves, holding a massive 21 trillion cubic meters of recoverable gas resources.

The gas industry in Iran has been expanded in recent years in order to meet future additional domestic energy requirements with gas rather than oil products. The economic needs of our country have also provided strong incentive to export Iran's surplus gas to foreign countries. In recent years, negotiations were continuing between Iran and several neighbouring countries such as Turkey, India, Pakistan, etc. over ways of exporting Iranian gas to those countries.

In an interview with BBC Radio Persian Language Service on 25 May, Manouchehr Takin, a former NIOC [National Iranian Oil Company] employee, said Iran is not expected to obtain any revenue from gas exports during the next few years.

According to Takin, the first export of Iranian gas began before the Islamic revolution to the former Soviet Union. After the revolution, some Iranian gas was piped to the Azerbaijan Republic, but Iran stopped supplying gas when Azerbaijan failed to pay for its gas imports.

Dr. Manouchehr Takin is currently responsible for all upstream petroleum analysis at the Centre for Global Energy Studies in London. Currently countries with exportable quantities of gas in the Persian Gulf include the Islamic Republic of Iran, Qatar, Oman and Abu Dhabi. In recent years, major projects have been under development in Qatar involving exports of Liquified Natural Gas (LNG). As a liquid, gas occupies about 1/600 of the volume it does as a gas.

According to Takin, gas development projects are characterized by huge investments, high transportation costs, and the need for long term commitments (20-25 years) by sellers and buyers. These facts thus provide a stabilizing element in the relationship of the buyers and sellers.

Therefore, unlike oil exports, exports of gas are relatively immune to threats of embargoes such as experienced in recent years when the United States shut off its doors to crude oil from certain countries.

It is therefore believed that high priority should be given to the completion of Iran's gas projects in the coming years since it will benefit the country in a variety of ways.

[The] Islamic Republic of Iran, bolstered by its giant gas reserves, has the physical capability to meet the world's gas needs in the next century.

Nepal & Bhutan

Nepal: Ruling Party Signals Intent To Preserve Coalition

BK0606060196 Kathmandu THE KATHMANDU POST in English 5 Jun 96

[Received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pokhara, June 4 — At a time when rumours of imminent mid-term polls are rife in the country, the governing Nepali Congress [NC] party has indicated that it intends to keep alive the present coalition government till local elections later this year.

That message was driven home by NC parliamentarian Krishna Bahadur Gurung at a regional party function here on Tuesday. [4 June] The lawmaker is known to be close to the highest echeleons of power in the governing NC which is the major partner in Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba's 10-month old three-party coalition government.

"The NC-led government at the centre must be propped up till local elections", Gurung said addressing a crowd of party functionaries. "There certainly will be mid-term polls, the only question is when".

Parliamentarian Gurung also emphasized that the NC had averted disaster by promoting one RPP [Rashtriya Prajatantra Party] junior minister to minister of state level. "Our party has no other option but to oblige with the whims of Rashtriya Prajatantra Party (RPP) to give continuity to this government", he said.

Gurung's remarks are the most frank expressed by a NC parliamentarian in public. Observors here say, it leaves no doubt that the NC is now seriously gearing towards snap polls but intends to keep its junior, but crucial partner RPP, in good humour till after the local elections.

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RPP, which controls 19 seats in the 205-seat House of Representatives, is crucial to the survival of the Deuba government whose NC party won only 83 seats in the last general elections held in November 1994. Since then the party has added a couple of independents in its fold but still falls short of the required simple majority of 103 seats without RPP support.

At the same function, NC general secretary Taranath Ranabhat also addressed the gathering but warned against hurtling the nation towards another mid-term polls. Ranabhat, however, did not completely rule out snap polls but only said leaders were working to avert such a prospect so soon after the last general elections.

"It will cost the country Rs [rupees] 7-8 billion on just one general elections which is a huge burden to a poor country such as ours", he said. "This government will not fall. But in politics anything is possible. So we should be ready to face any eventuality", he said.

Others to address the function were Kaski NC district president Shukraraj Sharma and Kaski DDC [District Development Committee] president Mahadev Gurung.

Nepal: Bhutanese 'Peace Marchers' Arrested by Indian Police

BK0606062396 Kathmandu THE KATHMANDU POST in English 5 Jun 96

[Received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kathmandu, June 4 — Altogether 104 Bhutanese refugee peace marchers who left their base camp at Panchandi, Siliguri this morning to undertake another appeal march from Bangrakote in Jalpaiguri district were arrested this afternoon by the Indian Police, according to Appeal Movement Coordinating Council.

Of the 209 peace marchers who were stationed at Panchandi in the outskirts of Siliguri in Darjeeling district since June 1, 104 boarded two buses to travel to Bagrakote, some 40 kms east of Siliguri, to begin to 10th appeal march to Bhutan. As soon as they had boarded the bus two police jeeps arrived at the spot. The buses with the peace marchers left Panchandi at 1030 hrs and in no time two Indian police jeeps placed themselves in front and back of the buses. As the buses entered Salugada, Jalpaiguri district, some 50 to 60 policemen blocked the road in front of the Bhaktinagar police post and ordered the buses stopped.

These marchers were the first batch of the third wave of to Bhutan.

When asked as to why the buses were stopped from moving forward, the attending police officials said that they had orders from higher authorities to stop every single Bhutanese crossing this police post whether walking or on vehicle. When DN Karki and Geeta Gurung, the leader of the 104 marchers said they would continue their journey forward to their next destination to undertake the march, the marchers were arrested under section 151 of CrPC [criminal procedure code]. Later the marchers were taken to Jalpaiguri town to be produced before the sub divisional executive magistrate court.

The provision 5 groups of peace marchers of the second wave during March and April were also intercepted once the marchers walked across to Jalpaiguri district. However, then the authorities had said that the peace marchers would not be arrested if they walked without the chest banner.

The later arrest makes the total peace marchers presently under Indian Police custody to 906 and the total number of peace marchers participating in three wave of peace marches to 1244 Bhutanese refugees.

The 950 marchers in the first wave were unconditionally released by the Siliguri judicial magistrate court.

Another 105 marchers are waiting to launch the 11th batch of peace march in the near future at the Indian base point in Siliguri. Similarly, several hundred more Bhutanese refugees are expected to take part in the future peace marches to Bhutan despite the repeated arrests by Indian police to demonstrate their desire to get back to their homeland Bhutan.

Pakistan

Pakistan: President Concerned About Indian 'Repression' in Kashmir

BK0606033796 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 6 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari has expressed grave concern over Indian repression in occupied Kashmir, where Indian troops forced the people to cast their votes at gunpoint. Talking to reporters in Dera Gazi Khan yesterday, the president pointed out that the Western and Eastern press as well as the Indian press described these elections as a big fraud that unmasked the brutalities committed by the Indian forces. President Leghari said the people of occupied Kashmir do not want elections. They demand the right to self-determination that India and Pakistan committed to in the UN Security Council resolutions. The president said the time has come when the people of occupied Kahsmir should be allowed to decide their own future so the situation in the region can improve

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and relations between India and Pakistan can be promoted for the sake of peace and prosperity.

Turning to the internal situation, President Leghari said there should be an end to political confrontation between the two major parties, which have identical approaches to the national issues. At the same time, the media should play its role and help the two parties sort out their political differences. The president also referred to the government's efforts to provide special funds to the less developed areas of all four provinces. He said the prime minister has assured him that Balochistan will be given more funds in a special allocation. He expressed the hope that these funds will help the provincial government undertake development schemes in remote areas of Balochistan.

Pakistan: Air Force 'Categorically' Denies Kickback Allegations

BK0506143196 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 5 Jun 96 p 12

[PPI Report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ISLAMABAD, June 4: The Pakistan Air Force (PAF) Tuesday categorically denied any shady deal with sagem of France in purchase of Mirage-III aircraft.

"The PAF cannot respond to such ridiculous allegations" the air headquarters said while commenting on a report in an English daily (THE MUSLIM) regarding 20 million dollars kickbacks in a reported deal with Sagem for purchase of 40 second hand Mirage-III's at the cost of 120 million dollars.

"The procurement is under purview of the defense ministry which does not come under the Chief of Air Staff" the air headquarters said.

The report alleged that the payment was made by the Director General Defense Production to the French company on the orders of the Chief of Air Staff instead of complying the executive order.

The French electronic group Sagem has also denied the reports that it paid bribe to win the deal. The firm, however, announced in Paris it would deliver refurbished versions of Mirage III fighter aircraft to Pakistan in a contract worth 500 million francs (96 million dollars). It however, did not say how many aircraft would be sent to Pakistan.

Our reporter Aroosa Alam's version: The PPI story seems to be a vague denial of our story which appeared in our issue dated June 3 under the heading "Dollars 20 Million Kickbacks in Mirage Deal". The denial has not quoted any sources. Nevertheless, THE MUSLIM stands by its story.

Pakistan: 'Positive Response' to Bhutto's Proposal Urged From India

BK0506065196 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 4 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Once again a call has gone out from Islamabad to New Delhi to resolve all differences between Pakistan and India. In a warmly worded message of congratulations to Mr. Deve Gowda, the new prime minister of India, the prime minister of Pakistan, Ms. Benazir Bhutto, has renewed the offer for direct talks to settle all outstanding issues on the basis of justice, mutual respect, and a firm adherence to internationally established principles.

Conveying felicitation and good wishes on behalf of her government, the prime minister of Pakistan has invited the Indian prime minister to put acrimonies behind and pave the way for solid friendship for the sake of the people of the two countries. Ms. Benazir Bhutto referred to the glorious inheritance of many fine and magnificent civilizations shared by Pakistan and India and made a strong plea for laying down the foundation of a peaceful South Asia based on equitable conflict resolution and reconciliation. She said as heirs to wisdom [as heard] of our ancient culture, Pakistan and India have much to offer to the world and suggested that the two countries proceed to stabilize their equation in order to be able to contribute to the good of the human race.

Relations between Pakistan and India have been victim of a frozen process of mutual contacts. While Pakistan has repeatedly invited India to resume talks to attend to the problem that needs to be resolved, the response from New Delhi has been one long spell of silence. This is not being good for either Pakistan or India. Both have been the losers as a result of this prolonged standoff. Ms. Benazir Bhutto puts a great deal of store by direct talks to seek solutions to difficulties that inhibit relations between the two neighbors. She has stressed the urgent need to relaunch the process of peace and stabilize the general climate in the subcontinent. She assured the new prime minister of India that her government was looking forward to work earnestly with the new government in New Delhi to create an environment free of tensions and conducive to peace, security and development.

Given peace and mutual accommodation and cooperation, the two nations of South Asia would realize their full potential enriching in the process their respective people and the human race as a whole. Prime Minister Ms. Benazir Bhutto suggested to her Indian counterpart

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that, given mutual respect and a firm adherence to internationally established principles, there was no reason why we — Pakistan and India — cannot resolve the differences in a just and good-neighborly fashion.

The prime minister of Pakistan hopefully referred to the election manifesto of the Janata Dal, the victorious party of Mr. Deve Gowda, the prime minister of India. She made a special mention of the part of the manifesto which discusses Pakistan-India relations. The Janata Dal manifesto had promised to the electorate that discussions with Pakistan will be held to resolve the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, keeping in view the sentiments of the people of the state. In this election promise by the Indian prime minister's party, Ms. Benazir Bhutto saw a remarkably positive attitude. Relying on this, she expressed the hope that progress would be made in the appropriate direction.

For her part, the prime minister of Pakistan, Ms. Benazir Bhutto, reiterated the offer to resume a dialogue aimed at the settlement of the core issue of Jammu and Kashmir. This would clear the way for the peaceful and amicable settlement of other outstanding matters between Pakistan and India.

In Islamabad, the general feeling is one of a newly kindled hope that with the installation of Mr. Deve Gowda's coalition government there would be a refreshing change in the attitude of India, heralding a trend toward resolution of disputes. This optimism is duly reflected in the message of the prime minister of Pakistan. Mr. Gowda can rest assured that any positive initiative from New Delhi would find a ready and equally positive response waiting for it. Pakistan wants peace not only for itself but for the people of Kashmir and for the people of India. In peace resides the secret of the prosperity and happiness of all people of South Asia.

Pakistan: 'Financial Irregularities' in Foreign Missions Detected

BK0506003496 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 4 Jun 96 pp 1, 10

[Report by Tariq Butt]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ISLAMABAD: The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) took into consideration the accounts of Pakistan's foreign missions for the years 1987 to 1989 on Monday and found financial irregularities of Rs [rupees] 30 million.

It directed the concerned authorities that the amount be recovered within six months from the officials responsible for the irregularities.

The committee further directed the authorities that the amount be deducted from the pensions of the officials responsible, who have since retired from service.

The meeting, presided over by PAC chairman Rao Mohammad Hashim, was attended by Pir Abbas Shah, Prince Gul Aurangzeb, Sahibzada Nasir Sultan, Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan, Hamza, Hamid Nasir Chattha, George Clement, the Auditor General of Pakistan and concerned Foreign Office officials.

In one of the instances, the PAC found, a director of the Pakistan Study Centre, Paris, received Rs 7 lakh as pay even-after his retirement and also took away furniture worth Rs 2.5 lakh.

The committee directed the authorities that a fine of Rs 50,000 be imposed on the concerned official besides recovering Rs 1 million from him.

A participant of the meeting told THE NEWS that the PAC also found misappropriation of Rs 16.5 million in hiring and repair work in 42 foreign missions.

The committee detected that an ambassador working in the Holy Land allegedly brought 19 air-conditioners to Pakistan for his personal use when he came back home.

Seven of them were installed at the Pakistan embassy while 12 were at another building owned by Pakistan.

In another instance, the committee found, a contract for repair and renovation of foreign missions was given to a company for $95,340 instead of the one which had given the bid for $62,380.

The PAC directed the concerned authorities that the money was not properly used and be recovered.

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka: Kumaratunga Greets New Indian Prime Minister

BK0406123896 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 4 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sri Lanka is confident that all aspects of her relations will advance with renewed vigor under the leadership of the new Indian prime minister, H.D. Deve Gowda. In a message of felicitations, President Chandrika Kumaratunga said that traditional ties between the two countries have endured for centuries and relations between the people have been particularly close. As countries which have been deeply committed to democracy, pluralism, and nonalignment since independence, India and Sri Lanka have much in common. The president said that these bonds have been further strengthened through collective endeavors within

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SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation]. Mrs. Kumaratunga has extended the sincere good wishes of the government and the people of Sri Lanka to the new Indian prime minister.

In another message, Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar has recalled [the] understanding and maintenance of good relations between India and Sri Lanka. Addressed to his counterpart, I.K. Gujral, he said that India-Sri Lanka relations have steadily matured to the mutual benefit of the people in the two countries. Mr. Kadirgamar said he looks forward with pleasure and confidence to a period of notable tranquility and great fruitfulness in the relations between India and Sri Lanka with Gujral at the helm of external affairs in India.

Sri Lanka: CID Uncovers 'Vital Evidence' of Sabotage in Blackout

BK0406102696 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 4 Jun 96

[Report by Kamani Alwis—received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] THE CID [Criminal Investigation Department] probing the Ceylon Electricity Board (CEB) strike has uncovered vital evidence to establish that there was a plot to sabotage the power plants and to plunge the whole country into total darkness, confusion and disarray.

In this regard, a senior Electrical Superintendent was taken into custody by the CID along with a vital part of a power station, CID sources said.

On the instructions of the DIG (CID) T.V. Sumanasekera, the Electrical Superintendent was questioned by the CID following statements made by a foreman and a fitter at the Gothatuwa power sub-station near Colombo.

The CID said according to the statements of the two men, the Electrical Superintendent had asked them to remove the particular part and bring it to him.

When the Electrical Superintendent was questioned and asked by the CID investigators to hand over the said part of the plant, he produced it and also admitted that the part was brought to him on his instructions by the two men at Gothatuwa sub-station.

He is now being held on detention orders issued under emergency regulations, the CID said.

Several special CID teams investigating the CEB strike have reported that much evidence had surfaced pointing to a deliberate power sabotage by certain members of the CEB technical staff and the union leadership.

The CID said that several such persons would be taken into custody for questioning for similar offenses as they had found evidence of sabotage.

Sri Lanka: Officials, Picketers Denounce Electricity Strike

BK0506065296 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 5 Jun 96

[Report by Dhanasiri Surasena — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A giant picketing campaign denouncing the Ceylon Electricity Board [CEB] strike and the forces obstructing the forward march of the People's Alliance [PA] government and calling for the continuation of commissions probing the misdeeds of the past regime was held opposite the Colombo Fort Railway Station on Monday June 3.

Employees of the State Printing Corporation, the Sri Lanka Nidahas Sevaka Sangamaya of Lake House, workers retrenched from the Thulhiriya Textile Mills and members of many other organisations participated in the hour long picketing campaign.

Deputy Ministers Alavi Moulana and Jeevan Kumaratunga, Provincial Council members Upali Kodikara, Chandana Kathriarchchi, Hector Bethmage, Sunil Jayamini, Upali Kodikara, Kamala Ranatunge and Mahinda Kuruwitage, and Lake House Worker Director K.G.S. Gamini led the picketing and the demonstration.

The participants held aloft banners which said, "Down with plotters trying to suppress Batalanda Commission," "CEB strike aimed to obstruct Riviresa operation [government military offensive in north]," "Continue Lalith assassination probe to a conclusion," "Power strike a UNP [United National Party] conspiracy against the government," "chase away all saboteurs" and "dismiss officials encouraging strikes".

Media Deputy Minister Alavi Moulana addressing the gathering said they were not opposed to trade unions. But they had assembled there to oppose petty union leaders who had fallen into the lap of the United National Party which is harassing and obstructing the PA government.

The conspirators leading strikes were trying to hand over the country back to the UNP by fishing in troubled waters, he said.

Youth Affairs, Sports and Rural Development Minister Jeevan Kumaratunga said the people should condemn the obstructions caused to the government by the UNP and petty socialists who are heaping unnecessary burdens on them after their liberation from 17 years of oppression.

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An ulterior motive of these saboteurs is to obstruct the President's efforts to develop the country and win the war, he said.

Sri Lanka: Arrangements Made To Resettle Displaced Tamils in North

BK0306124896 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 3 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The government is to conduct a census in liberated areas of the Jaffna peninsula. Around 100,000 forms for this purpose are being printed and the census will begin soon after the authorities receive these forms. The chairman of the Rehabilitation Authority of Liberated Areas in the North, (Somapala Guradera), has said that all details regarding displaced families, their homes, property, industries, and the damage caused to them during terrorist activities is being obtained through this census. A 12-page document will be distributed among them to obtain these details and three officials each will visit these houses in liberated areas to conduct the census which will be concluded by the end of September.

The government has made arrangements to resettle the displaced Tamil civilians of the North in their homes. These people will be sent to their hometown by ships twice a week. Two teams of 150 each from Colombo, Vavuniya, and Trincomalee have been sent to their hometown. Another group will be sent back to their homes next Wednesday. Displaced Tamil civilians in the North, who are willing to return to their homes, should report to the nearest police station and register themselves. Meanwhile, action has been taken to cultivate onions in 1,000 hectares of land and chilies in 800 hectares in liberated areas during the yala [spring] season. Necessary stocks of seed will be airlifted to Jaffna from Colombo for this purpose.

Sri Lanka: LTTE Reports Attacks on Military Posts in Mullaitivu

BK0406151496 (Internet) Tamil Eelam News WWW in Tamil 29 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A military post along the route to the Vallipura temple was attacked at Mandigai locality in Vadamarachchi the day before yesterday. One soldier was killed. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam [LTTE] did not suffer any loss.

Another post was simultaneously attacked in the heart of Jaffna city. The fortification, near Windsor Picture Palace, was attacked the day before yesterday. There is no report of any losses suffered by the armed forces. LTTE cadres, who carried out the offensive on the area said to be under the full military control, did not suffer any casualties.

Two Sri Lankan Air Force Kfir jets carried out bombing raids on the coastal areas of Mullaitivu early yesterday morning. The aircraft streaked past the coastal areas between Koramoddai and Matalan with their deafening echoes and disappeared after dropping a few bombs. There were no casualties. The Elephant Pass military camp also launched heavy missile attacks on surrounding areas on 28 May. These indiscriminate attacks commenced early in the morning and were reported to have been continuing until noon. Civilians did not suffer any losses.

Tamil travelers were attacked by the members of People's Liberation Organization of Tamil Eelam [PLOTE] group at Tandikkulam checkpost for the second day yesterday. Even children were mercilessly beaten with batons. Members of the PLOTE reportedly insulted travelers and that some were even forced to kneel for a few hours.

The Sri Lankan Government has refused to distribute educational materials to Tamil schools. The Department of Education has announced that educational materials will not be provided to students from areas not under military control. Accordingly, fabric for school uniforms will not be provided to students who are from outside military-controlled areas.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Karunanidhi has announced that the Tamil Nadu government will urge the new central government to intervene to find a political solution to the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka. Speaking at the Tamil Nadu legislative assembly today, he added that not only the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, but all Tamil Nadu political parties are worried about the hardships of the Sri Lankan Tamils. He also said his government will urge the new Indian Government to intervene to find a political solution to the ethnic crisis.

Thanks.

The Tigers' aspirations: motherland of Tamil Eelam!

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